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PRECIOUS THINGS
FROM
THE EVERLASTING HILLS;
OR,
Pleasant Fruits for all People.

By the Late
REV. JAMES SMITH,
Author of "The Believer's Triumph," &c.



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PREFACE

ALL saving and sanctifying truth is from God. It was conceived in his heart, communicated by his Holy Spirit, and is to be found in his word. It is intended for our use, to enlighten the understanding, to quicken the affections, to regulate the will, to purify the conscience, to store the memory and to guide the life. It is pure as the sunbeam, pleasant as the fruits of Paradise, and necessary as the atmosphere we breathe. To know the truth, is a great attainment. To enjoy the truth, is a high privilege. To spread the truth, is an imperative duty. God commands it, man requires it, and Christians should diligently attend to it. By the truth God works, the Christian conquers, and the sinner is turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God. The truth of God is invaluable, yet every one *ought*, every one *may*, possess it. Preachers proclaim it, the press publishes it, and every believer should assist to spread it.

This small volume contains truth—God's truth. Truth in a variety of forms. Truth clothed in simple language. Truth illustrated by plain figures. Truth for the head, and truth for the heart. Truth that has been *tasted*, *handled*, and felt by the

writer; and is now affectionately commended to the reader. Truth suited to health and to sickness; to bright days and to dreary seasons. Truth that a man may live by, and truth that will do to die by. Here is a candle for a dark room, a lantern for a dark road, and a lamp for a dark heart. Light to work by, light to walk by, and light to suffer by.

Reader, before you turn over the pages of this book, look up and ask God for a blessing. No book will yield you spiritual profit without it. Ask the Holy Spirit to accompany what you read with his own power, savour and unction; and if your prayer is answered, you will bless God that you ever saw it. Beseech the Lord, not only to bless it to you, but to render it useful to others: to multitudes of your fellow men. In vain we write, or read, without the power of the Holy Spirit; but if favoured with that, the meanest instrument is efficient,—*this* little book will be successful. When you have read the book, *lend it*: If you can afford it, purchase a few copies to distribute among your relatives, friends, acquaintances, or neighbours. Follow the gift of every copy with much prayer, and when you pray for the book, ask the Lord in mercy to bless the Author.

JAMES SMITH.

Cheltenham.



HEAVEN UPON EARTH.

"As the days of heaven upon the earth."—DEUT. xl. 21

Few things are more important than truth. Nothing is so important as the truth of God. It is our light, our map, and our food, through the whole journey. In the context, Moses is giving direction to the Israelites, as to how they were to treat God's word. He directs them to hide it in their hearts, as a treasure; to wear it on the forehead and on the hand, as a costly ornament; to teach it to all about them, as a most important lesson; and to write it upon the door posts and gates, as a badge of honourable distinction. The argument he employs to induce them to do so, is long life and happiness in the promised land. "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, *as the days of heaven upon the earth.*" So that our sub-

ject embraces two points, perpetuity and pleasure. We shall dismiss the former, and confine our attention to the latter. Real religion, as it appears in a practical conformity to God's will, secures to us the purest and sweetest enjoyment. Or, filial obedience to God is the way to realize the joys of heaven. True saints when entirely engaged in God's service, enjoy spiritual and solid happiness. They know experimentally what the Psalmist meant, when he said, speaking of the Lords' precepts, "In keeping of them there is a great reward." Religion was designed to purify and elevate our enjoyments, but not to diminish them. Indeed, real christians are the only happy people, and all true and consistent christians are happy. Under all their trials, troubles, and sorrows, they have a source of comfort to which all are strangers but themselves. But they have some peculiarly pleasant seasons, some precious times, which they call the days of heaven upon earth. Let us inquire then,

First, *What constitutes such days?* The answer to this inquiry would include many things, we can only notice a few. *The sensible presence of God.* When the Lord comes to visit them, and manifest himself unto them, as he doth not unto the world; when his light beams upon the intellect, and his love flows into the heart;—when he unfolds before them his perfections, and discovers his sublime and glorious attributes, they feel the power of a present God,—they are sensibly impressed with his glory, beauty, and love,—they realize that in all his greatness and glory, he is their Father,—that they have nothing to fear from his wrath, but every thing to expect from his favour. It is, indeed, heaven upon earth to enjoy the presence of God, as our Father and everlasting friend. *A perception of the glory of Jesus.* There are seasons, when the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to us, in all his grandeur, beauty and glory. We get a glimpse of his divinity shining through his humanity. We behold his glory, as the glory of

the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. He appears to us then, as the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. No tongue can describe, no language can set forth, no pencil can pourtray, the beauties of the Son of God, as they appear to the enraptured believer at such times. He is, indeed, all over glorious; and the discovery is generally attended with a sense of interest in him, which causes the heart to melt and flow forth in love and gratitude unto him. Such a season is, indeed, one of the days of heaven upon the earth. *The witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart*, to our adoption into the Lord's family, and acceptance at the Lord's throne. There are times when we have not only the conviction derived from past experience and the testimony of the divine word to our adoption, but the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God. He softens the heart, stamps the divine image there, and then throws light upon it, that we may see it. He opens

the heart of God, shows us his infinite and unutterable love, whispering "You are interested in it." He brings home some precious portion of the word, accompanying it with such divine impressions as awaken sweet and indescribable sensations, so that doubts cannot live in the bosom at such a season. These are "days of heaven upon the earth," when the conscience is secretly and powerfully assured of its part in the Redeemer's blood, and the benign Comforter bears his sweet witness with the heart, that we are born of God. *Loving union with God's saints*, in his church and service. It is one thing to meet where saints meet, join in the same religious exercises, have the name in the same church book, and another and different thing to be lovingly united to them. Then we view them as one with Jesus, as the brothers and sisters of Jesus, as united together to promote the glory of Jesus. Our hearts are united to them; our sympathies are all with them. We look upon them as the excellent of the

earth, and can say with David, "with whom is all my delight." Then to unite in prayer at our Father's throne, or in songs to the honour of our Redeemer's name, or to speak with them and hear them tell of the work of the holy and ever blessed Spirit upon the heart, is like one of "the days of heaven upon the earth." *Spiritual and powerful worship.* When God is viewed as a Father upon the throne, waiting to be gracious ; when we see Jesus before the throne, as the one Mediator and Intercessor, waiting to present our praises and petitions ; when we feel the Holy Spirit in our hearts, leading us to confess sin with sorrow, to ask for grace and mercy with confidence, and inspiring us with gratitude, so that praise flows freely and naturally, it is one of "the days of heaven upon earth." The sanctified spirit of the believer worships God as a spirit. in spirit and in truth. The power of the Holy Ghost enables him to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, to draw near to God as upon a mercy seat, and

with the sweetest joy and peace, have fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. Worship, without spirituality and power, is a poor lifeless form, but when, generated by the Spirit in the heart, it ascends direct to God through the hands of our great High Priest, it is a sweet and pleasant service, a sacrifice acceptable unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Prosperity in the Church. To see the Lord's people united together, loving one another, walking in order and holy fellowship, full of faith, fervour, and affection; to see sinners impressed under the word, inquiring after the way of salvation, and seeking admission to the fold; to hear the recently decided tell, how they were wounded by the law, and healed by the gospel; that they had renounced the world, and embraced the Saviour; that they had discovered the way into the kingdom, and requesting to be received into the fellowship;—these things produce joy unspeakable and full of glory, they form a bright spot in the wilderness, a delight-

ful page in our history ; they make “ days of heaven upon the earth.” But,

Secondly, *What is realized on such days ?* Here we need special help, for what is so difficult as attempting to set forth the joys of the Lord as experienced by his saints? If you, reader, have never enjoyed them, we can convey no adequate idea of them to your mind. But if you have happily experienced them, our imperfect hints will be understood. At such times we realize *the pardon of all sin*. We feel that our sins are forgiven us for Jesu's sake ; that God has blotted out all our trespasses ; that we are acquitted of all blame ; that we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus ; that God's heart glows with unutterable love to us ; that his book contains no charge against us ; this brings *sweet peace with God*. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; the peace of God rules in our hearts ; all slavish fear of God is gone ; the bosom is tranquil ; the spirit is calm ; the prospect is clear ; hope is lively ; then comes *the*

joy of the Holy Ghost. Peace is quiet, calm, and settled. But this joy is full of life, vigour, and power; it makes the heart dance at the sound of the name of Jesus; it fires the soul with desire to ascend to God, to see him as he is, and be with him for ever; it strips earth of its beauty, and wealth of its value, and transfers both to heaven: it is paradise restored, and the joys of Eden brought back again to man; it centres in God, and ascends to God; its language is, "I will go unto God, unto God my exceeding joy;" it fills the intellect with light, the heart with energy, and the mouth with praises, so that we can say with Peter, "We rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Now there is *freedom from all cares.* For what has the happy believer to be anxious about? His sins are pardoned; his person is accepted; his mansion is being prepared; his peace is made; his portion is infinite; his wants have been considered, and his supplies are guaranteed; "All things are his," so far

as he needs them. God watches over him, Jesus is with him, the Holy Spirit comforts him, and it must be well with him; he has God's ear, and there he lodges all his wishes, desires, and fears; he has God's heart, and from thence he expects "all things that pertain to life and godliness." In addition to this, there is *superiority to death*. On these days of Jubilee, death has lost its terrors, for we see that it has lost its sting; it is viewed, simply as a departure from this world, as going to the Father, as putting off the tabernacle, as ascending to be with Christ, which is far superior to remaining here. In a word on these hallowed days, our wishes are granted, our desires are satisfied, our hearts are full, our praises are hearty, for our souls are thoroughly happy; and if they did but always continue, we should wish for little beyond them. Now, let us inquire,

Thirdly, *What do such days teach us?* They teach us that *religion is a reality; a divine reality*. Not merely a moral system,

or a creed, or a course of formal observances; but a power, a life, a great and glorious fact. That it purifies, elevates, and imparts solid and substantial pleasures. That it is the great want of humanity, and the choicest gift of God. They give us some faint idea of *heavenly services*. We read of the glorified ones, that they serve God day and night in his temple. They rest not, and yet all is rest. Their labours are finished, and yet they are always at work. The services of the upper world must be sweet, the pleasures of that country must be refined, the joy of that state must be glorious; if what is experienced below, which is as one drop from the ocean, one ray from the sun, or one grape from the vast vineyard, is so unspeakably precious and delightful. They teach us *the inferiority of temporal things*. They are not to be compared for one moment with the things that are spiritual and eternal. They are dross, these are pure gold. They are darkness, these are light. They are *slavery*, these are liberty. All

that the world can furnish is poor, and vain, and worthless, compared with the solid joys and substantial pleasures of religion. They teach us *the power of divine truth over the mind*. The effect of the truth of God, when accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit is wonderful. It enlightens, enlivens, elevates, and purifies ; it produces a new creation ; it brings us into a new state, furnishes us with new motives, generates new tastes, forms new habits, making our wilderness like Eden, and our desert as the garden of the Lord. They teach us *the wonderful condescension of God*. How surprising it is that God should regard, respect, or pay attention to creatures so sinful, degraded and vile. But how much more surprising that he should visit us, take up his abode in our hearts, fill us with his own love, and let us drink of the cup of celestial joys. But so it is, for we speak what we know and testify what we have tasted and felt.

Reader, heaven comes down to us, before we ascend to it. We have not only

the title to heaven, but we have the earnest, the first fruits. As Israel saw and tasted of the grapes of the promised land in the wilderness, before they passed over Jordan to possess it, so have we tasted of the peace, joy, and sublime pleasures freely and eternally enjoyed above. This leads us to say of heaven, when our hearts are full of peace and joy, as the spies of old said of Canaan, "It is a good land, and this is the fruit of it." Experimental christians have no doubt of the superiority of heaven to earth, of things spiritual, to things temporal; and that not merely on the ground of what they have heard or read, but from what they have tasted and handled themselves. Religion is to them light, air, food, exercise; they cannot live without it; they are unhappy when they do not feel its power, taste its joys, and realize life in its services. We may, then, have heavenly days in earth's dreary wilderness. Yes, there are Elims with their palms and fountains; there are streams which *make* glad the city of our

God, there are spiritual blessings in heavenly places to be enjoyed while here below. If we enjoy such pleasant days, such beatific prospects, such sweet foretastes now, ought we to doubt or fear? Or, rather, ought we not to look forward with joyful hope, lively anticipation, and earnest longing, exclaiming, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." But if we are strangers to these things, then we are strangers to some of the sweetest things in religion, to the very best things that can be enjoyed on earth. Reader, is your religion a happy religion? Does it make you happy? Can you say with Paul, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus by whom we have now received the atonement." Beware of being satisfied with a religion without power, or without pleasure. If you are justified you will have peace with God. If the Holy Spirit witness to your adoption you will experience

Remember the kingdom of God is meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The Jews, the circumcision, or the spiritual Hebrews, are those who "worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have confidence in the flesh." A religion without peace, joy, and love, is, to say the least, suspicious; for wherever the gospel takes home in demonstration of the Spirit and power, there is always faith in Christ, love to God, and the joy of the Holy Ghost.

Meet and right it is to sing,
In every time and place,
Glory to our heavenly King,
The God of Truth and Grace.
Join we then with sweet accord,
All in one thanksgiving join!
Holy, holy, holy Lord,
Eternal praise be thine.

Father, God, thy love we praise,
Which gave thy Son to die;
Jesus, full of truth and grace,
Alike we glorify:
Spirit, Comforter divine,
Praise by all to thee be given,
Till we in full chorus join,
And earth is turned to heaven.



WHAT IS CHRIST TO YOU?

THIS is a very important and searching question, an answer to which will go far towards deciding what is our state before God. In times like these we ought to be decided, and to know how we stand in reference to eternity. We ought not to be satisfied with an uncertain hope, or an ill-founded confidence. Our calling and election should be sure. We should be able to say with the beloved apostle, "*We know that we are of God.*" "*We are passed from death unto life.*" "*Now are we the sons of God.*" Our standing before God depends on our connection with Christ; and the state of our heart depends upon our intercourse with Christ. Let us, then, briefly look at the question.

WHAT IS CHRIST TO YOU? If I reply for myself, I say, He is *the foundation of my hope*; for I have no hope towards God *but what* is founded on his person, sacri-

fice and finished work. I hope for pardon, because he died for sin ; I hope for justification because he rose from the dead ; I hope for eternal life, because he ever liveth to make intercession for me. The depravity of my heart, the imperfection of all my services, and the unholiness of my life, forbid my hoping for acceptance with God, access to God, or the enjoyment of God, upon any other ground. The Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, is my hope—He is also *the object of my faith*. As I believe in God, I believe also in him. I believe him to be what his word declares—I believe he has done what the gospel proclaims,—I believe he will give what he has promised to those that seek him. I have no confidence but what is founded in Christ. Take away Jesus, and I despair. But while he occupies his proper place, I can believe that God will graciously pardon, fully justify, and faithfully keep my soul. My trust is in him, and in him alone. I rely on his obedience, blood-shedding, and *perfect work*. I depend on

his mediation, substitution, and atonement for eternal life; and feel persuaded that he will keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. He is *the source of my supplies*. I look to him for all I need for body and soul, for time and for eternity, for temporal and spiritual things. I believe that the wealth of God is stored up in him,—that every blessing promised is in him,—that all the provisions of the everlasting covenant are entrusted to him,—that he has heaven and earth at his command. I therefore ask of him, look to him, expect from him. To him I confess my poverty. With him I lodge my complaints. To him I present my petitions. From him I expect my supplies. I believe the testimony that it hath pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell. I have had a glimpse of his glory, and perceive that he is full of grace and truth. I have received with pleasure the information, that all things are delivered unto him by his Father. I therefore repair to him as the fountain of

living waters. I trust in him as able to supply all my needs. I expect from him, because he has kindly and faithfully promised.—He is *the subject of my meditations*. Not a day passes but my thoughts are occupied with Jesus. Forget whom I may, I never forget him. Nothing feeds, nothing refreshes, nothing delights my soul, like vigorous meditations on Jesus. I dwell at times on the glories of his person, the riches of his grace, the merit of his blood, the transcendent glory of his righteousness, the tenderness of his sympathy, the constancy of his love, the vastness of his resources, the greatness of his power, the variety of his characters, the glory of his offices, the prevalence of his intercession, and the grandeur of his second coming, until I am enamoured with his beauty, and enraptured with his love. My meditation of Jesus is sweet, and it makes me glad in the Lord. My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth praises him with joyful lips, when I remember him upon my bed, and

meditate on him in the night watches. It is delightful to occupy our thinking powers on Jesus and his glorious salvation. May I meditate upon him daily and hourly ; and may my last thought in the article of death be, a thought of Christ—He is *the theme of my song*. No song pleases me if the name of Jesus is not in it ; and the more it has of Christ in it, the better it pleases me. It is sweet to think of Christ ; but it is at times, a little heaven on earth to sing of Christ. Herein we resemble the inhabitants of the better world, for they are singing, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

“Oh, that I could now adore him,
Like the heavenly hosts above,
Who for ever bow before him,
And unceasing sing his love :
Happy songsters,
When shall I your chorus join.
He is *the solace and joy of my soul*. In

sorrow I repair to him for solace, and in sadness for the joys of his salvation. There are times when no one can make me happy but Jesus ; but he always can : blessed be his holy and adorable name, he sometimes does. When all is dark within me, when all is dreary around me, when all is discouraging before me, he fills me full of joy with his countenance. One look from his eye, one word from his lips, one breath breathed on my soul, relieves, restores, and makes me happy. He is the river of pleasure, in which I sometimes bathe ; he is the Eden of delights in which I sometimes walk ; in him are the wells of salvation, from which at times with joy I draw. Take away Jesus, and my soul droops, desponds, and dies ; give me Jesus, and the enjoyment of his presence, and I can do without any other heaven. He is the glory of my brightest days, and my solace in my dreariest nights.

“ When upon my restless bed,
Amidst the shades I roll,
If my Redeemer shews his head,
’Tis morning with my soul.”

In a word he is *the Alpha and the Omega of my salvation*. It begins, it proceeds, it is completed in him. He engaged in the everlasting covenant. He appeared in the fulness of time. He bore our sins and carried our sorrows. He put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself. He brought in the everlasting righteousness. He conquered death, hell, and the grave. He ascended up on high, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. He sent his gospel by his servants, and his Holy Spirit to apply it to the heart. He ever lives to intercede for us. His strength is perfected in our weakness. His grace is sufficient for us. Having obtained help from him, we continue to the present day. By his grace we are saved. Such is the testimony of holy writ, and such are the views that revive my faith, refresh my soul, and endear my Redeemer to my heart. My experimental religion began with my feeling my need of him,—it proceeded until I realized my interest in him,—it stands now in my daily making use of him,—and

it will be perfected by my everlastingly enjoying him. Jesus is my all, and my heart at this moment says,

“ Christ shall be my living theme,—
Christ shall be my dying hope ;
All I want is in his name,
Nor can I sink with such a prop.”

And now, reader, WHAT IS CHRIST TO YOU ? Have you been able to go with me in my statements ? Is thine heart as my heart is ? Perhaps you say, “ Yes ; but the half has not been told.” The half ! No, not the ten thousandth part ! The glories of Jesus are infinitely beyond our comprehension. Now we know in part, and we prophesy in part ; but that which is perfect will soon come, and then shall we know even as also we are known. Is Jesus precious to your soul *to-day* ? Is he the joy and rejoicing of your heart ? Is he divinely glorious in your estimation ? If so, you are the subject of the Spirit's work : for he it is who glorifies Christ before us, within us, and by us. He

takes of the things of Jesus, and shew them unto us. Without the presence, power, and operation of the Holy Spirit we should never trust in him, boast of him, look to him, or surrender ourselves into his hands to be saved by him. Every right view of Christ, every honourable thought of Christ, every sweet enjoyment of Christ, every effort to honour Christ, every attempt to imitate Christ, flow from the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. The more we experience of the Spirit's work, the more shall we love Jesus, exalt Jesus, extol Jesus, obey Jesus, and be conformed to the likeness of Jesus. Oh, that the Spirit of God, then, would work more powerfully in all our hearts !

But perhaps my reader has no sympathy with me, but looks upon what I have written as a mere rhapsody. Is it so ? The Lord from my heart I pity you,—from my heart I pray for you. You need just such a Saviour as Jesus is. No one but Jesus can save you from hell, raise you to heaven, or give you solid happiness in this

present world. But Jesus can. Oh, that you felt your need of him! Oh, that you would flee to him to be saved from the wrath to come! Oh, that you would cast yourself into the arms of his mercy, and enjoy a free, full, present, and everlasting salvation! What is Christ to you *now*? Is he your precious Saviour? Is he your daily food? Is he the joy and rejoicing of your soul? Is he the foundation of your hope, the object of your faith, the source of your supplies, the subject of your meditations, the theme of your song, the solace and joy of your soul. The Alpha and Omega of your salvation? He *will* be your Judge by-and-bye. He will either condemn or justify you. He will either invite you to inherit a kingdom *prepared for you*, or, command you to depart from him into everlasting burnings, *prepared for the devil and his angels*. Which will it be? Which? Have you come to any conclusion on this point? Have you decided in your own mind whether you shall go to hell or heaven? If so, to which

are you going ? If you have not, is it not time you had ? God grant that each of my readers may be led to sing, in the words which have been sung so often ; which have ascended to heaven from so many true hearts,—

“Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb,
We love to hear of thee :
No music 's like thy charming name,
Nor half so sweet can be.

“O let us ever hear thy voice,
In mercy to us speak,
And in our Priest we will rejoice,
Thou great Melchisedec.

“Our Jesus shall be still our theme,
While in this world we stay ;
We'll sing our Jesu's lovely name,
When all things else decay.

“When we appear in yonder cloud,
With all the sacred throng,
Then will we sing more sweet, more loud,
And Christ shall be our song.”





WHAT ARE YOU TO CHRIST?

THE love of Christ and his people is reciprocal, so also is their interest in each other. Christ is to his people their portion, possession, and special treasure; they live upon him, rejoice in him, and look to him, under all circumstances, for all they need. This is truly gracious; but not so wonderful as the consideration of what the christian is to Christ—the least, the feeblest, the most imperfect christian: for the connection and interest depend on the reality, not the degree, of christianity. The least member is part of the body, though most distant from the head, or generally concealed from view; so every christian is one with Christ, beloved by Christ, and exceedingly dear and precious in the sight of Christ. As we have considered what Christ is to the christian, let us, then, for a few moments, look at what *the christian* is to Christ.

Believer, have you considered what you are to Jesus ? If so, you will be prepared to answer the question ; and though you may be obliged to think before you know where to begin, as also where you are to stop, yet you will be at no loss to answer as to some points. You will be prepared to say, "*I am the purchase of his blood*." He had set his heart upon me. He was determined to possess me. But as he would do nothing dishonorable, and as divine justice had arrested me, he determined to purchase me. The price demanded was great beyond calculation. The whole universe, apart from himself, was insufficient. Nothing would meet the demand but his own blood, his own life, himself. Having made up his mind, nothing could change his purpose, or alter his determination. He said, "*They shall be mine.*" And, therefore, "he gave himself for us." He redeemed us with his own "precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." We, therefore, "are not our own, being bought with

a price." We are the purchase of his blood, who "is Lord of all." He never forgets the price he paid for us, or the value he set upon us; nor let *us* ever forget that we are his property, but let us endeavour, always and everywhere, to glorify him in our bodies and spirits, which are his.—"*I am the object of his care.*" He careth for us. His care is constant, tender, and extends to our minutest affairs. "The very hairs of our head are all numbered" by him. He cares for our persons, comforts, and all our concerns. He, therefore, directs us to lay low at his feet, and confide in his care, saying, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you." He exhorts us to be prayerful and thankful, but neither anxious nor careful, saying, "The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God: and

the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Jesus cares for his people always and everywhere: at home, abroad, in sickness, in health, in prosperity, in adversity, in life, in death. He withdraweth not his eyes from them, but ever cares for them, watching over them to do them good. He is the kind and careful Shepherd, that cares for every lamb in his flock, for every sheep committed to his trust.—"*I am the child of his providence.*" Brought by it upon the stage of time. Placed by it in my present circumstances. Dependant upon it for all my various supplies. On the bosom of his providence I lean. In the hand of his providence I trust. To the resources of his providence I look. His providence is my parent. It provides for me. It sends to me. It daily supplies me. It has anticipated my necessities. It demands my confidence. It tries my faith. But it always supplies my wants. Providence is Jesus in action to do his

people good. He hides himself often behind his instruments, or what we call second causes ; but he is ever present, providing for and supplying the wants of all who place confidence in his word. His promise tells me what he will do, and his providence just does what he has told me. I cannot, then, be either friendless or fatherless, for the providence of Jesus acts toward me a father's part.—“ *I am the subject of his intercession.*” He ever liveth to make intercession for me. He never forgets or loses sight of me. My name is on his priestly breastplate,—my concerns are all under his eye. His blood speaks for me. His influence is exerted for me. He lives in heaven for my good. He is my Counsellor,—I am his client. He is my Advocate,—I am his brother for whom he pleads. His intercession brought me up out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. His intercession supports my faith, and frustrates the malicious designs of Satan. His intercession brings down ten

thousand blessings, and prevents innumerable evils. Sweet thought this—Jesus intercedes with his Father for me. Yes, in all times of darkness and distress,—in all seasons of danger and depression,—when my heart is cold and prayerless,—when my faith is weak and wavering,—when my hope is feeble and faltering,—when my love is reduced to a spark, or appears extinguished,—then, yes, then, Jesus intercedes for me. When Satan tempts me on earth, or accuses me in heaven,—when all within and without is dreary and distressing,—then, yes, then, Jesus intercedes for me. *This* moment, and *every* moment, Jesus makes me the subject of his powerful and prevailing intercession.—“*I am the temple of his Spirit.*” The Holy Spirit has taken possession of me in his name. He dwelleth in me. My very body is declared to be the temple of the Holy Ghost. He came to me as the Spirit of Christ. He claimed me as the Spirit of Christ. He entered *my heart* as the Spirit of Christ. By his

work he proves himself the Spirit of Christ. He daily keeps me sensible of my need of Christ. He shews me the exact suitability of Christ. He leads me out of self to Christ. He teaches me to renounce every other name but the name of Christ; so that I build on him, and on him alone, for pardon, peace, and final acceptance with God. The Spirit of Christ dwells in me—this is my evidence that I am Christ's. How wonderful, that a nature so depraved, that a creature so insignificant, that a sinner so vile, should be constituted, consecrated, and acknowledged to be the temple of the Spirit of Christ! Yet so it is!—" *I am the epistle of his love.*" Manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ. His truth is written on my heart by the finger of his own Spirit, and I am sent into the world to bear witness of his love. He sends by me to sinners. He speaks by me to sinners. He opens by me his loving heart to the guilty sons of men. He says, "Go publish in every direction, in characters

and terms that all can read and understand, that I am Jesus,—that I save the vilest,—that I save freely,—that I save all that come unto me,—that I delight to save any, even the foulest transgressors,—that I not only save, but raise those whom I save to the highest dignities, and confer on them the greatest honours. Proclaim abroad, that my heart is love, that my blood has made an infinite atonement for all sin,—that I am exalted to give repentance and pardon,—that I have made peace between God and all that come unto him through me.” Oh, wondrous mercy, to constitute me his epistle of love! But if I am really a christian, I am a living, authentic, and useful epistle of Christ.—“*I am a joint heir with him of the eternal inheritance.*” Jesus is appointed heir of all things. All things are committed unto him by his Father. He has all power and authority in heaven and in earth. He claims the universe as his own. But with a special reference to the inheritance that *is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth*

not away, reserved in heaven for the saints, the apostle has said, "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." But what tongue can tell, what heart conceive, what is included in being a joint heir with Christ? The blessing seems to be vast as God's loving heart, and boundless as God's own eternity. Well may it be said, "We know not what we shall be." Nothing could please us better than to add, "But when he shall appear, we shall be like him." Like him! this is just what we desire. Like him! this is the sum of all our prayers. Like him! this stretches to the utmost bounds of all real excellency. Like him! this is doing for us exceeding and abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Like him! this is conferring on us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Oh, believer, what privileges are thine! What dignities are conferred on thee! How favoured, how honoured, how glorious art thou! How much Jesus makes of thee. Can he possibly make more of thee

than he does? He calls you his love, his dove, his undefiled. He considers you as of more value than his own comfort, or even his own blood. He was willing to labour and suffer for three-and-thirty years, and then to die the most painful, shameful, and ignominious death for thee. And he has never ceased to think of thee or taken his eye off thee for one moment, since he brought thee on the stage of time, but especially since he called thee by his grace. Thou art the purchase of his blood,—the object of his care,—the child of his providence,—the subject of his intercession,—the temple of his Spirit,—the epistle of his love,—and a joint heir with him of the eternal inheritance. What canst thou be more? Can he esteem thee more highly? Can he love thee more heartily? Can he display his grace in thee more fully?

But *sinner*, what art *thou* to Jesus? Thou art his enemy. Thou art opposed to him. Thou lovest him not. Should he deal with thee according to thy sins, or

reward thee according to thine iniquities, how fearful would be the consequences, how dreadful the result! Can you read of the believer's privileges without wishing to enjoy them? Can you hear of the christian's honours without desiring to share them? Is the love of Jesus nothing to thee? Is the blood of Jesus treated as a common or worthless thing by thee? "Behold, *now* is the accepted time! Behold, *now* is the day of salvation!" The way of escape is cast up before thee; the entrance is close by thee; strive, then, to enter in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and *few* there be that find it. Will you be among that few? But because wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, *many* there be that go in thereat. Will you be among the many?





WHAT SHALL I DO FOR JESUS?

WE live in stirring times: everything almost is in motion. Mind is especially active, either for good or evil. We have many active spirits in the Church, but all are not active. We have many in our congregations who throw their energies into the Lord's cause, but there are many who do little or nothing. They have no idea what they could do. They never suspect how useful they may be. They have settled down with the opinion, that the cause of God will go on very well without them. Some of these excite our concern, some grieve us, and some get in our way and hinder us. Here is a question for every one such especially — a question for us all: What shall *I* do for Jesus?

Reader! did you ever put this question to your conscience? Are you willing to


do so now ? It can do you no harm ; it may do you good. But first ask, *Did I ever do anything for Jesus ?* There are many things done in the Church, and by professors in the world, but they are not done for Jesus. There is some other object in view. The eye is not single. The heart is not true. The motive is not pure. Did you ever give yourself to the Lord ? This is the first thing to be done. Jesus will not accept anything from you until you have given him yourself. His first request is, "My son, give me thine heart." Withhold from him the heart, and you withhold from him all. He will approve of nothing that you do. He will receive nothing from your hands. You are his enemy. You are in rebellion against him. You refuse to acknowledge his claims. You withhold his just rights. You grieve his loving heart. If you have not, let me beseech you to go to his throne, present yourself before him in the attitude of a suppliant, offer him your heart just as it is, saying

“Take my poor heart, just as it is,
Set up therein thy throne :
So shall I love thee above all,
And live to thee alone.”

Having given him yourself, you may ask with Saul of Tarsus, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?” And be sure that he has something for you to do, and something that no one will do so well as you—something that no one ought to do but you. He will say, “Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.” What can you do ? This you can never tell until you try. What are you *willing* to do ? This you may soon ascertain. There is the Sunday-school. Can you do anything for Jesus there ? Can you take a class ? If not, can you go round the neighbourhood, and collect the children who are still untaught, that others may teach them ? There is the house of prayer. Can you do anything there ? Is it full ? If so, cannot you look out for young persons who attend, unnoticed by any in the congregation, and notice them, trying to get from


them whether they feel the power of the word, and try and follow up the preacher's appeals by a word in private? An immense amount of good may be done in this way, if our people were only alive to its importance, and would do it for Jesus. Is the congregation thin? Cannot you increase it? Did you ever set about trying in good earnest? Is there no *one* that you could influence to attend? *What! not one?* If you could influence one, that one may influence another; and in this way our chapels would soon be filled. There is the minister. Can you do nothing for him? Do you regularly contribute for his support, *according to your means*, not making the subscription of any one else your rule, but giving just as God has prospered you,—doing it for Jesus? Do you set apart a certain portion of time every week, that you may pray for him? Are you regular in your attendance on his ministry, and always early, that you may pray for him as you see him ascend or enter his pulpit? Do you take inquirers

to him, encouraging them to go and open their hearts to him when concerned for the salvation of their souls? There are the sick. Do you ever visit them? Jesus takes the visits paid to his sick saints as paid to himself. He says, "I was sick, and ye visited me." "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me." How often do the Lord's sick lie and long to see a fellow-worshipper or a fellow-member come in, to read a portion of God's Holy Word, to offer up the prayer of faith, or speak a word to them of Jesus! How many fears may be banished, how many temptations may be removed, how many sufferers may be cheered, how many sorrowful believers may be comforted, if their fellow-believers, instead of indulging self, would visit them for Jesus, and speak to them of Jesus? There are the poor. Will you relieve them? The poor saints more especially. Jesus takes what is given to them as given to himself, and promises a reward. Hear his words, believe them, try to



realize the truth and importance of them, that you may be influenced by them : “ Whosoever shall give to drink unto *one of these little ones* a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, *verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward,*” Matt. x. 42. You see, if you relieve the least saint, with the smallest gratuity, not being able to do more, and do it for Jesus, he pledges his word that you shall on no account lose your reward. And how striking is the language of the Holy Spirit by the Apostle James ! “ Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father *is this*, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world,” Jas. i. 27. Tried by this standard *how much pure religion have you ?* Some professors, and some church-members, have very little. When did you dry the widow’s tears, and satisfy the orphan’s wants,—going to *them*, and not waiting for them to come to you ? Will you do this for Jesus ? There are the enemies of Christ, as all careless sin-

ners are. You may speak to them, offer special prayer for them, and try to *win them* over to his cause. "He that winneth souls is wise." But if we would win, we must be winning. Love is the key of the human heart. Once get it in, and you may soon open the door. Love will use gold, silver, kind words, and winning deeds, and thus get access to the heart that was locked against truth and against God. Did you ever attempt to do this for Jesus ? Once more, there is the heathen world. Men and money are wanted ; you may help to provide them. The power of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary ; you may help to bring down that. There is plenty to do, and no time to be lost ; for while we trifle or delay, Satan is working, time is flying, souls are perishing, saints are suffering, the cause of God is languishing, Infidelity is spreading, Popery is gaining ground, and we are missing the mark. Let every Christian man, let every Christian woman, then, put the question to the heart, **WHAT CAN**



I DO FOR JESUS? What *more* can I do than I have done? What *more* can I give than I have given? Consider what he has done for you, what he is now doing for you, what he has already given you, what he has promised you, what he deserves from you, what he expects at your hands, the honour he has put upon you, the trust he has committed to you, the charge he has given you, the account he will demand of you, the rule by which he will reward you ; and then ask, *What can I do for Jesus?* And if there be any faith in his blood, if there be any love to his name, if there be any reverence for his authority, if there be any concern for his cause, if there be any zeal for his glory, if there be any pity for sinners, if there be any regard for his word, ask, and be honest in asking, *What can I do for Jesus?* Reader! there is much needs doing, there is much that you may do, and if you stand idle now, you must regret it by-and-bye ; rouse, therefore, and work.



"I EXPECT GREAT THINGS THEN!"

THE Lord Jesus is gone to receive a kingdom, and he intends to return. During his absence his people have to work in his vineyard, suffer in his cause, and watch for his appearing. Our work is often difficult, our sufferings severe, and watching so long becomes tedious. But as Jesus has promised to come, he assuredly will; as he has given us his word that he will not tarry, but come as soon as his work before the throne is done, we may depend upon his being here as soon as possible. As he is coming to bring us grace, in a degree which we have never enjoyed, and glory, such as we have no conception of, his coming should be the object of our hope, desire, and love. The thought of it should give us joy, the anticipation of it should fill us with delight. It did a poor, afflicted, suffering believer of whom I have heard; and who, when

asked why he looked forward to the coming of Jesus with so much joy, said, "*I expect great things then.*"

Beloved, we may not have much now. Our temporal supplies may be scant, and our outward comforts but few. Our sufferings may be great, and our trials painful. Without may be fightings, and within may be fears. But Jesus is coming. Jesus, who is our Brother, Husband and Friend. He is coming in glory. He is coming to reign. He is coming to render reward to his servants. He is coming to fulfil all his promises, and accomplish the glorious predictions of his holy word. His coming is the greatest event we can look forward to. It is the blessed hope of his church. It is the desire of all his saints. Our brightest prospects and sweetest anticipations depend on that. Our groaning world appears to long for it. The sorrowful church should daily pray for it. And every sigh that escapes from the tried believer's heart, rightly interpreted, cries, "Come, Lord Jesus,

come quickly." Well, cheer up, my poor tried brother and sister, for "He that is to come, will come, and will not tarry. He is now engaged for us. His loving heart now beats with tenderest affection towards us. He would have us with him, or he would come and be with us, were it not that his Father's glory and our best interests require it to be otherwise. He has said once, and he is in the same mind still, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." This is the very thing we desire, and it is the very thing we shall enjoy; for he will soon come "the second time without sin unto salvation, and "*we expect great things then.*"

What do we expect then? The *sufferer* expects to be free from disease and pain; for "there shall be no more pain then. Every christian will have a healthy body. The nerves, the muscles, the senses will no more be the seats of disease, or the inlets of pain; but what was sown in


corruption, will be raised in incorruption! what was sown in dishonour, will be raised in glory; what was sown in weakness, will be raised in power; what was sown a natural body, will be raised a spiritual body. The *mourner* expects to be freed from the principal cause of his mourning, even sin. He will then be delivered not only from its guilt, but from its very being, not only from its annoyance, but from its existence. As the body will be free from pain, so the soul will be free from sin; and body and soul will exactly resemble the glorified humanity of the Lord Jesus. Every *christian* expects to have a sight of Jesus, to see him as he is. To gaze with rapture and delight on his glorified body, tracing the thorn prints on his brow, and the nail prints on his hands. To realise with ecstatic delight that Jesus is his own Saviour, his glorious Redeemer, his ever-living and ever-loving Lord. The sight of Christ will eclipse the glory of everything visible, and will leave impressions on the soul which will never be

erased. It will exceed all that ever was seen, conceived, or anticipated. It will fire the soul with unutterable love, and fill it with inexpressible joy. The believer will then receive a glorious crown, "a crown of glory which fadeth not away." "A diadem of beauty." "A crown of life." He will be clothed in white robes, and have the palm of victory put into his hand. A seat near to Jesus will be awarded to him. He will be introduced to the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." To the kingdom prepared for the saints "before the foundation of the world." To the "inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." He will be elevated above his fears, exalted above his foes, and enjoy absolute certainty for ever. Every desire will be gratified, and his soul will be perfectly and for ever satisfied. Are not these great things? But these and many more are the great things which the christian may expect, for "eye hath not seen, nor ear

heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him." Well may it be called the "blessed hope." Well may primitive saints be represented as "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Well may the saint "*expect great things then.*"

My christian brother, is the coming of Jesus the object of your hope? Are you anxiously and prayerfully looking forward to that glorious event? Do you "*expect great things then?*" If so, you will not be so much affected as some professors are, by the things which perish with the using. You will live above the world. You will cast your cares upon your God. You will look over many little annoyances and troubles. You will rejoice in hope when all around you is cold and dreary. You will not avenge yourself, but leave many things to be adjusted when Jesus comes. You will act as one that "must appear before the judgment seat of Christ,"—as one that must "give an account of

himself to God." The coming of Jesus will stimulate you to all holy obedience, and will be a preventative to your settling down in the world, or indulging in sin. Expecting great things when Jesus comes, you will not be affected by little things now, but "in your patience you will possess your soul." Expecting great things when Jesus comes, you will quietly carry your cross, manfully face your foes, and diligently employ your talents in your Master's service. Expecting great things when Jesus comes, you will aim in all things to "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering," lovingly bearing with the imperfections of your brethren, "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Expecting great things from Jesus when he comes, you will be desirous of doing great things for Jesus now he is away, and will be willing to suffer great things for Jesus if he may but be glorified thereby.



Beloved, if you are indeed a christian, you cannot expect too much when Jesus comes, but you may expect too little now. He has promised you many great and glorious things now; and he is quite willing to make good his largest and kindest promises. He waits to be gracious. He waits until you want, until you ask him, until you are earnest with him to bestow. The moment the fulfilment of the promise is necessary for you, and will bring glory to his holy and ever-blessed name, that moment will the promise be fulfilled. Expect much from Jesus now. Ask much from Jesus now. But yet when clouds gather, when dangers press, when foes collect, when difficulties increase, when causes of sorrow arise, look forward,—anticipate the coming of your Redeemer, and rejoice. In all times of tribulation, in all seasons of conflict, and in all circumstances of discouragement, “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the appearing of Jesus Christ,”

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for you may “*expect great things then.*” He has told us of “earthly things” in his word, and they have been so great that we have scarcely believed him; how astonished, how delighted, how inexpressibly joyful shall we be when he brings us to see, to receive, and to enjoy “heavenly things!” Then we shall have great peace, great joy, great glory. Our wealth will be immense, our satisfaction perfect, and our inheritance eternal. Happy believer! though thy lot be low, thy present resources small, thy conflicts severe, thy sufferings continued, and thy temptations painful, for Jesus is coming; “Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him,” and you may “*expect great things then.*” Nor can your expectations possibly be cut off.





“I LIKE TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.”

ON one of the rainy Lord's-day mornings, a short time ago, a young person was preparing to go to the house of prayer, and was hesitating as to what dress she should put on; at length, taking hold of one suited to the weather, she said, “*I will put on this, for I like to be on the safe side.*” This was wise, and especially if the idea was fully carried out. Who does not profess to wish to be found on the safe side? Ask whom you will, and you will get nearly the same answer. But comparatively few give much attention to the matter. There are two sides, the one dangerous, the other safe; make the best of it, the one is uncertain, and the other is sure.

Look at the Infidel. He denies the Bible to be God's book. He walks by his own reason. He gratifies his senses or his lusts. He lives in sin. He must

soon die. He has no Saviour. He has no good hope. If the Bible be false, he is safe; but if the Bible be true, he is ruined for ever. What a fearful alternative. But has it made the impression upon him which it ought? Has he examined the evidences of the authority and inspiration of the Bible? Ten to one if he has. Has he carefully read the Bible *through*, with a sincere desire to know if it is God's book or not? Ten to one if he has. He has heard certain things said against the Bible. There are many things in the Bible which he does not, in his present state of mind cannot, like. He is prejudiced against it. He feels toward it as Ahab felt towards Micaiah, and for the same reason. It never prophecies good concerning him, but evil. It requires him to change his present course; but he loves it. It requires him to change his mind upon many and most important subjects; but he likes his present views best. He loves sin, and the Bible condemns it. He gratifies the lusts of the

flesh, and the Bible bids him mortify them. In a word, there is as much opposition between him and the Bible as between light and darkness, holiness and sin, truth and error; therefore he hates it. He has no solid rest, no settled peace, no certain hope, no bright prospect beyond the grave. At the best, with him all is uncertain, unsatisfactory, and vexatious. He is certainly not on the safe side.

Look at the true Christian. He believes the Bible to be from God. He has examined it. He has evidence of its inspiration in his heart. He fully believes it. What it says of himself as a sinner, he knows to be true. What it says of Jesus as a Saviour, he has proved to be a fact. As guilty, he has applied to God for pardon, and obtained it. As impure, he has sought the cleansing operations of the Holy Spirit, and enjoyed them. His guilt is gone, therefore he has no slavish fears. His soul is justified, therefore he has peace with God. He approves of the inspired precepts, and regulates his life by

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them. He carries his cares to God, and is delivered from them. He realizes that God is his Friend, his Father, and his everlasting Portion. He is peaceful. He is often happy. To him death has no sting, and eternity no terror. He knows Jesus as a Saviour, and trusts in him. He knows God as a Father, and walks with him. He knows the Holy Spirit as a comforting Teacher, and listens to him. He is, perhaps, more tried than the Infidel, but he has supports, consolations, and pleasures, of which he knows nothing. He lives to bless others, to honour God. to prepare for a glorious immortality. He would not change his worst day for the Infidel's best day. He is on the safe side. If the Infidel should be right, the Christian is no loser. But if the Christian is right, — and he is, — therefore, — unless grace prevent, the Infidel will be an infinite loser.

Look at the mass of those by whom we are surrounded. They are not positive infidels; but are they Christians? Are

they on the safe side? There is the side of God, are they on it? There is the side of Satan, are they on it? There is the side of Jesus, are they on it? There is the side of the world, are they not rather on it? No one is on the safe side who has not "a new heart," "a right spirit,"—who has not been washed from sin in the blood of Jesus, and sanctified to God by the indwelling and operation of the most holy and ever-blessed Spirit. Unless robed in the Redeemer's righteousness, adorned with the fruits of the Spirit, and walking contrary to the course of this world, we are not on the safe side. Is Christ found in my heart the hope of glory? Is my body the temple of the Holy Spirit? Am I walking in holy fellowship and daily communion with God as my Father? Have I grace in my heart, and glory in my eye? Is the world under my feet, and a crown of life suspended over my head? If so, I am on the safe side.

To be on the safe side now, is to be on


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the side of holiness,—to hate sin,—to be free from sin,—to confess sin with sorrow and grief before God,—to sigh and pray for perfect, complete, and everlasting deliverance from all sin. To be on the safe side now, *is to be on the side of Jesus*,—to love his truth, and do all we can to circulate it,—to love his people, and do all we can to increase their holiness and happiness,—to love his cause, and defend it, maintain it and extend it,—to love his ways, and walk in them without partiality or hypocrisy,—to love his appearing, and be daily looking for it with desire, preparation, and patience. To be on the safe side, is to be *on the side of God's people*,—united with them, working with them, and striving to increase their number. This is to be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. This is to be justified from all unrighteous things, to have peace with God, and be prepared for glory. This is to have passed from death to life, and to have obtained inheritance among all them that are saved.

tified by faith in Jesus. This is to be fit to live prepared for death, and qualified to enjoy a holy heaven.

Reader, on which side are you ? There is but *one* safe side. There is no safety for a sinner now, but at the Cross ; and there will be no safety at death and judgment, but in Christ. There is a day of storm coming ; a horrible tempest is lowering ; once more the fountains of the great deep of God's wrath will be broken up, and the windows of heaven will be opened. Upon the wicked he will rain snares, fire, brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this will be the portion of their cup. There will then be no safety but in the ark, and that ark is Christ. No garment will do for that great and dreadful day of the Lord but the garment of salvation ; no robe will do for the marriage supper of the Lamb but the robe, the glorious, the magnificent, the costly robe of Jesus' righteousness. Lay aside, then, every other dress. Do not venture out in the rags of your own righteousness, in the

worthless garment made up of prayers, tears, repentance, reformation, and hope in the mere mercy of God. Be on the safe side. Flee to Jesus, and flee at once. Submit to the righteousness of God, and submit at once. Seek for a place in, and meetness for, the kingdom of God, and seek at once. The day of decision is at hand. The hour of separation will soon be here, as it is written, "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall *separate them* one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand," (*the safe side*), "and the goats on his left." (Matt. xxv. 31-33). He that is on the safe side now, will be on the safe side then; but there will be no changing sides. Who, then, is on the Lord's side? *who?* Reader, are you? Are you *sure* of it? Is there *no doubt?* Take heed to be on the safe side.





COMFORT FOR THE POOR.

“Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”—**MATT. vi. 32.**

THE Lord Jesus, as the great teacher, is instructing his disciples in the doctrine of divine providence, and teaching them to exercise faith in God. He tells them that God feeds the sparrows and clothes the lilies, and therefore, will not neglect, or refuse, to feed and clothe them. He would have them to be children. Children do view the Most High as their Father. Who are absolutely dependent upon him. Who look to him for all; and expect him supply them with all. This is our portion. This is our privilege. Yea, this is our duty. Anxiety does not become us. Anxiety is injurious to us. Anxiety grieves our heavenly Father. He knows our circumstances. He will not forget his relation to us. He will never allow us to cause *to complain* of him, or re-

flect upon him. Let us for a few moments look at

The relationship. God is *our Father*. He has adopted us by his grace. We were by nature fatherless, so far as spiritual relationship is concerned; or, if we had any father, it was the devil. We were in an abject condition. But in his infinite mercy, for the glory of his own free grace, God adopted us, placed us among his children, and so changed our state and condition. He regenerated us by his Holy Spirit, and so gave us a new nature; that we may not only have a name and a place among his children, but possess their nature too. Life was imparted to our souls. Light was shed on our understandings. Desires after God sprang up within us. Conviction of sin pierced us. The demands of the law terrified us. Fears of hell beset us. Satan harrassed and distressed us. At length Jesus was revealed to us. The throne of grace was unveiled before us. We approached the *mercy seat*. We pleaded for pardon. We

sought reconciliation. We were drawn near to the Divine Majesty. God was revealed in Jesus. The Spirit of adoption took possession of our souls. We cried, "Abba, Father." We were acknowledged as children. The love of God was shed abroad in our hearts. The peace of God took possession of our consciences. We felt that we were passed from death unto life. We believed the love that God had unto us. We were inwardly persuaded that he was our Father. We were satisfied. We were happy. We felt that all was well with us. Had this experience always continued with us, doubt, fear, or anxiety could never have troubled or distressed us. But a change came over us. The world influenced us. Satan deceived us. Our own hearts were false and feeble. Still the relationship remained. We had a Father.

God is our *heavenly Father*. And as the heaven is high above the earth, so far does God's relationship exceed all human relationships. To have God for our Father,

is the height of blessedness, it is the crowning privilege. Nothing can exceed this, for his love is infinite, and embraces all his children. His love cannot change, for that would imply a change in his nature. But he says, "I am Jehovah, I change not." Every thing out of the Divine nature may change—there is a possibility; but his love is Jehovah himself loving; and as his nature cannot change neither can his love. His resources are boundless and supplies all his children. They are never sent to any other quarter for supply, but always bidden to come to their Father for all they need. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's." His pity is exquisite, and sympathises with them all. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." His knowledge is perfect, therefore he is acquainted with them all. "All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom

we have to do." He knows every one's residence, every one's wants, woes, and wishes. For "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong on the behalf of all them whose hearts are perfect, or sincere, towards him." His power is omnipotent, and protects them all. He says, "No one is able to pluck them out of my hand. I will strengthen thee; I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." His nature is unchangeable, and his covenant is sure; therefore he will be to us, and do for us, what he was to, and what he did for, our brethren before us. Scripture history unfolds God's love to, and the method of his dealing with his children. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." What a mercy to have a Father, and such a Father! To have God for our Father in a world like this, and in times like these. To look up to the High and Lofty one, and rejoice that he has a father's heart, and that that heart beats with unutterable love

to me. To be able in the midst of trials, troubles, temptations, losses, crosses, disappointments, and vexations, to look up and say, "I will cry unto God most high, unto God that performeth all things for me." Let me then consider,

The consolation my Saviour holds forth. "Your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." He created us to want. He never intended that we should be self-sufficient or independent. He placed us where we should want. Man must want, and want much; but man as a sinner must want more. He created us men, he allowed us to make ourselves sinners, and then (O, amazing grace!) he took us, adopted us, and made us his children. To want therefore is natural. To want many things that we do, proves that we are sinful; but to be placed in circumstances where man's wants shall be supplied, is supernatural. Sin breeds anxiety, and a gracious God bids us cast all our cares upon him, assuring us that he *cares* for us. His eye is ever upon us!

His eye is a Father's eye, which is always quick, and affects the heart. He has set his eyes upon us for good. His eye is ever over us, fixed immediately upon us. His ear catches every sigh, every groan, every desire. It is always open to our cry. He listens to us as one most tenderly and deeply interested in us. He knows every want, and he intends to supply us. But while he has made up his mind that we shall not want, that he will not withhold any good thing from us, he will try our faith. Often does he say by his dealings, "Can you trust me? Can you leave this affair with me? Can you give me time? Can you give me credit for kindness, truthfulness, and constancy?" He will make us pray. He loves to hear us; and when to ourselves our prayers are like the roaring of a river, or the chattering of a crane, they are pleasant to him. He will, by keeping us waiting, enhance the value of the blessing. That which is easily obtained, is often little set by. But that which costs us groans,

sighs, prayers, tears, and efforts, is much more valued. Therefore it is that we are kept waiting, watching, and crying for the blessing. God is not unwilling to bestow, but he will teach us to prize and value his gifts. He will display his wisdom in promoting our welfare. God's ways are not our ways. They are always profoundly wise; and his wisdom will in the end stand conspicuous and glorious in his paternal dealings with us.

Beloved, if God is our Father, he will chastise us. We need it. We deserve it. We shall have it. He never had a child he did not chasten, because he never had but one, who did not deserve chastening. But he will mix mercy with every affliction. Like sugar in our tea, it sometimes lies at the bottom, and needs stirring up; but there is always mercy there. A cup of unmixed wrath was put into the hands of Jesus, that such a cup might never be put into ours. There is sweetness in the bitterest cup, which our Father gives us; let us therefore look for the sugar, as we

sip the bitter potion. He will take the meaning of our prayers; yea, of our groans, sighs and tears. Who understands a child like his father? Especially the father that is always with him. Our Father understands us, he needs no interpreter. He never requires us to go to him by a human priest, by a saint, or by the Virgin. He says, "Come boldly to the throne of grace." "Come alone. Come when you will. Come for all you need. I shall understand you. I will attend to you. I will bless you." Jesus is always before his Father for us. Jesus is the medium through which our Father looks upon us, loves us, and converses with us. We need no other. It reflects upon our Father's love, and our Saviour's sufficiency to employ another. Let us disclaim all priests but Jesus. Let us refuse to go to God through any medium but Jesus. Let us rejoice that our Father reads our hearts, understands our language, and will grant our requests, so far as he can consistently with his glory and

our good. He will prevent Satan from prevailing against us. Our heavenly Father will never let that roaring lion devour one of his children. That old serpent shall never destroy one whose name is in God's family register, and whose record is on high.

If God is our Father, we ought to depend on his providence. It is particular and minute. It numbers the hairs of our head. It superintends all our concerns. We ought to submit patiently to all his will. His will is love. Whatever he does, or permits to be done, he will overrule for our good. In the greatest trial, under overwhelming afflictions, he says, "*Be still.*" Let us then lie at his feet, when not permitted to pillow our heads on his bosom. Let us be silent before him when we cannot see the end of his dispensations, or his kindness in permitting them. We ought cheerfully to obey his commands. His apostle assures us, that "his commandments are not grievous." They may cross our inclinations. They

may run counter to our habits, prejudices, or pre-conceived opinions ; but if our hearts are right, they will not be grievous. The very fact of their flowing from a Father's love, and being backed by a Father's authority, should be enough to make us cheerfully obey them. We ought patiently to endure our trials, quietly carry our cross, and show by our conduct we esteem it an unspeakable mercy *to have a Father, and such a Father.* A Father, who knows our wants, has provided for them, and will in his own time supply them. A Father, who knows our wishes, and will, as far as his glory will permit, gratify them. A Father, who ever loves us, will never leave us, but constantly cares for us. A Father, who wishes us to be free from all anxiety, to cast every care upon him, to leave the settlement of all our affairs to him, and trust him with all that we esteem valuable for time and eternity. O, sinner, you have no such Father ! You are at present a poor friendless orphan. But the door of mercy is open. The throne of grace is

accessible. God still admits sinners to his presence, and places penitents among his children. Backslider, you had a Father once! You have left your Father's house, you have wounded your Father's name, you have grieved your Father's heart. You were happy once, but you are unhappy now. Your Father is calling upon you to return. He waits to be gracious unto you. He will receive you graciously, he will love you freely. Go to thy Father's throne, confess thy sin, plead for pardon, appeal to mercy, and soon, very soon, thou wilt be rejoicing in thy Father's changeless love.

"Then let us, while we dwell below.
Obey our Father's voice;
To all his dispensations bow,
And in his name rejoice.

"How sweet to hear him say at last
Ye blessed children come:
The days of banishment are past!
Your Father calls you home."



“ALL RIGHT.”

‘*All right ;*’ so shouted the conductor of an omnibus, in which I was riding through one of the streets of London the other day. He simply meant that all was ready for the driver to go on ; but how much more do the words frequently imply ! What deep thoughts, what important enquires, do they awaken in a serious mind ! It may be “all right” with my reader, and if so it is a great mercy ; but it may not, and if so it is a serious matter. Let the omnibus conductor, then, furnish us with a text and let us try and derive some profit from the subject he suggests. It is “all right,” or it is *all wrong*, one or the other, as it respects the soul and eternity ; for there is no intermediate or middle state. Allow me, then, to propose three questions,—

First, *is the heart “all right”* ? This is a momentous question, for by nature it is radically and universally wrong. Every

imagination of the thought of the heart is evil, only evil, and that continually. It is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. It is a fountain which sends forth streams of pollution as black as hell. From within, out of the heart, proceed all manner of evil, and every species of crime. It is, therefore, naturally wrong, and no one can rectify it but the Holy Spirit. The gospel is the instrument, but the Holy Spirit is the only agent that can effectually change a sinner's heart. He does so by a silent, secret, invincible power; by which he softens, sanctifies, and consecrates it to God. He destroys the image of Satan which was set up in it, and sets up the image of Christ in its stead. He changes its bent and bias, so that we desire what we despised, seek what we contemned, and love what we hated. If the heart is "all right," God is the object of its love, Christ is the object of its faith, the gospel is the object of its veneration, the salvation of sinners is the object of its pursuits, and heaven is the object of its hope. If the heart is

"all right." Christ is found in it, grace reigns over it, prayer and praise flow from it, and holiness is ardently desired by it. If the heart is "all right," the bible is prized, the Sabbath is sacred, and the ordinances of the gospel are highly esteemed. If the heart is "all right," it exalts Christ highly, it obeys God cheerfully, and it hates all sin with a strong, if not a perfect hatred. If the heart is "all right," it mourns over faults committed, struggles against corruption within, and sighs for freedom from temptation and depravity. Reader, is thy heart "all right?" Inspect it narrowly, watch it closely, examine it carefully, and take heed lest it deceive you. If it is right now, it was wrong once, and you know it. If it is right in the sight of God, *you* see much that is wrong in it, and, therefore, take it to the word of God to be searched, to the open fountain to be cleansed, and to the Spirit of God to be purified. Settle this point before we proceed, for every man is as his heart is. Right or wrong


then, which is it? If right, who made so? How was it made so? What is the proof that it is so? Let these questions be deeply and seriously pondered, let them be honestly and satisfactorily answered.

Second, *is the head "all right"?* the head we mean the intellect, thinking faculty. Is it light or dark? Instructed or ignorant? Is the eye of the mind clear and penetrating? Is judgment sound and correct? Are views scriptural and sanctifying? Do they have their minds full of confusion; there is no order in their thoughts, no arrangement of their ideas, no clearness in their perceptions. They scarce know whether salvation is by works or by grace; whether they must trust in Christ or in the virgin; whether they must look to Jesus for help or to themselves for part. They do not receive into their minds God's revelation of himself, and subject their judgment to the judgment of God. Fallen and unaided reason is enthroned, and reveals


is required to bow before it, and be imperiously judged by it. Then the head is all wrong. If the head is "all right," God's word is its standard, its directory, its rule. It receives whatever God has revealed, believes whatever God has said, and requires obedience to whatever God has commanded. It views God as a loving Father,—Jesus as a compassionate Saviour,—the Holy Spirit as a gracious Comforter,—the bible as revealing God's mind,—the church as God's residence,—the world as God's fallen kingdom,—time as a preparation for eternity,—and God's glory as the legitimate end of every action. When the head is "all right," it traces up every good thing to God, and every evil thing to the creature. It magnifies God's grace in its salvation, and acknowledges God's justice in the condemnation of the lost. Reader, how is it with thy head? What are your views of self, of sin, of salvation, of sanctification, of hell, and of heaven? How think you of Christ, of grace, of the church, and of *the world*? Do your views

correspond with God's views as revealed in his word? Are your thoughts the same as God's thoughts on all the great subjects referred to? If not, your head is not "all right." Take your head as well as your heart to the bible, and examine it carefully by that.

Thirdly, *is the life "all right"?* The life is but the exposition of the heart, the exhibition of the ruling principles of the nature. Man generally lives outwardly, according to the nature that he possesses inwardly. Like the trees in nature, the fig tree will not bear olive berries, nor the vine, figs; so neither can we expect a holy life from an unholy heart. If the principles are unsound, the life will be incorrect. A cloak may be put on, a mask may be worn, a pretence may be made, but the man must sooner or later be detected. That man only is "all right" in his life, who makes the precepts of God's word his rule, seeks grace to obey them because he loves them, and strives daily and earnestly to conform his life to them. The



grace of God which bringeth salvation unto all men, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. If the acquisition of wealth, if to obtain worldly distinctions and honours, or if to enjoy flesh-pleasing and carnal pleasures, be the great object of life, all is wrong. But if to honour God, to imitate the Saviour, to spread the gospel, to bring sinners to Christ, and to bless and benefit all around us to the utmost of our power, be our object, then, in reference to our life, it is "all right." We then love God supremely, and the whole race of man heartily. We copy the Saviour's example. We shew our faith by our works. We prove the power and purity of our principles by our practice. The conduct confirms and illustrates the excellency of the creed. We are the living epistles of Christ, known and read of all men. But if we are selfish, stingy, worldly, proud, conceited, contentious, unlovely, we cannot be "all right," for Jesus has said,



and from his decision there is no appeal, "By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

Let us, then, when we hear the omnibus conductor or the railway guard cry out, "ALL RIGHT," ask ourselves these three questions: Is my heart "all right" in the sight of God? Is my head "all right" when examined by God's word? Is my life "all right" in the view of discerning, honest, and impartial men? Let us put these questions into the hand of conscience, let us take them to God's throne, let us look at them from the sick bed, as we stand by the side of our coffin, and in the light of eternity, which will soon burst upon us; remembering that if wrong, we may now be set right by the grace and Spirit of God; but if we neglect to examine into the matter, we may soon have to cry from the depths of despair, "I was all wrong, and shall be wrong for ever."



EXAMINATION SOUGHT.

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”—Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

WHEN the Holy Spirit leads us carefully to consider, or clearly to see any spiritual subject, we generally turn that subject into prayer. David had been meditating on God's searching him, on his accurate knowledge of his nature and ways, and on the Divine omniscience and omnipresence. This led him to appeal to the Divine eye, as to his hatred of sin and incorrigible sinners, and then from a knowledge of the deceitfulness of the human heart, and the power that sin has to conceal itself, he pleads with God to search and examine him. He was an honest man, for none but an honest man is willing to be searched. He was a holy man, for none but a holy man would wish to be searched. He was a believer, for without faith in the atonement, no one could bear to be searched.

God's searching eye will drive any sinner to desperation, unless he knows the way to the cross. What a solemn position we occupy, surrounded by the presence of a holy God; thinking every thought, speaking every word, and performing every action under the eye of a sin hating God. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." We will notice,

First, *the investigation sought*. "Search me, O God, and know my heart." Here is an appeal to the Omniscient. He would have God's eye penetrate to the depths of his nature, and look at what was concealed under the many mysterious folds of his heart. He presents his heart to God, on purpose to have it examined, wishing to know its true state and condition. No one can honestly make such a request with thoughtfulness, but the sincere soul. "Search *me*." It is personal. "*Me*," not my neighbour, my friend, or my brother. But Lord, *search me*. *Search*, not merely glance at me, but make thorough

work. Search my entire nature, especially the secret and hidden part, which no human eye can see, and where wickedness may lurk which no one about me would suspect. Search me, so as to know, and make known to me *the good*, even the work of thine own Spirit, the principles of thine own grace, the new nature produced by thine own power. Search me, so as to know, and make known to me *the bad*. Even that which is my own. What I brought into the world with me, and all the evil principles which I have nourished and encouraged in my soul. "Try me," test me as they do the precious metals, see am I gold or dross, am I a saint or only a reformed sinner? Has my heart been changed? Have I been renewed in the spirit of my mind? Have I been born again? Am I a new creature in Christ Jesus? Know the state of my heart, and let me know it. Try my principles, my profession, and tell me, are they divine? is it scriptural? O, to be decided! To feel decided! To come to a certainty, and

that under God's sanction and approbation. "Know my thoughts," and make me know them. Their nature, are they good or bad; spiritual, or carnal; wise, or foolish; to be encouraged or rejected? Their tendency, is it to honour God, or dishonour him; to benefit man, or mislead him; to exalt Christ, or extol the creature? Their end, will they bring peace, or conflict; comfort, or sorrow; spirituality, or vanity; credit or disgrace? Our thoughts are sometimes wholly corrupt, flowing naturally from our depraved hearts; but they are seldom or never wholly pure, for though the Holy Spirit suggest them, our corrupt natures are sure to defile them. The power to think is a wonderful thing, and the effect of a thought is often most remarkable. "See if there be any wicked way in me." Let me know the worst of myself. Let me into the secret of my true state before God. Are there wicked principles at work which will lead me wrong; grieve thy Holy Spirit; and bring me pain and

shame? Is there any wicked plan, or proposed course, contrary to thy holy law, my profession, and the design of my creation? Lord, shew me myself. Let me not deceive others, or be deceived myself. Others have been led astray, let not me. I have before been almost overcome, which renders me jealous and wary. I know my heart is deceitful. I know I am partial. I know Satan is crafty, therefore, Lord, "see if there be any wicked way in me." This brings us to notice,

Secondly, *the desire expressed*. "Lead me in the way everlasting." If we go right, God must lead us. When God left perfect Adam to himself, he soon went wrong. And from that day to the present, the testimony respecting the whole of his posterity is, "They have turned every one to his own way." Even saints cannot be trusted. When God left Hezekiah to try him, and shew him what was his heart, he manifested vanity and pride, before the ambassadors of the king of Babylon. And David wandered so far,

and became so weak, that he could not find his way back to the fold. Therefore he was obliged to cry to the great Shepherd, "I have gone astray like a sheep that is lost, seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." But *where* would the Psalmist be led? "In the way everlasting." In God's own way. The way which he devised, revealed, points to, and approves. "The way of holiness," which is the way to heaven. God's way is clean, and the unclean shall not pass over it. It is correct, and never bewilders or leads us astray. It is permanent, not shifting and changeable. An everlasting way, leading to everlasting happiness, everlasting holiness, and everlasting honour. Where all our powers will be purified, rightly balanced, and directed, and consequently produce peace, pleasure, and satisfaction. Where all is pure, clear and refined, so that we see, feel, and act exactly according to God's holy and righteous law. When we shall be robed in righteousness, crowned with glory, and, as the adopted sons of God,

be publicly acknowledged before all worlds, and placed nearest the eternal throne. Well may the Psalmist desire to be in the way which leads to such an end. *What* did he desire? To be led. The wicked are driven. Some professors are like the horse or the mule, which must be held in with bit and bridle. David wishes to be a child, and to be treated as such, therefore he prays, "Lead me." "Lead me in thy truth and teach me, O God of my salvation, on thee do I wait all the day." He wishes to be simple and docile. To this we must all be brought, for our Lord says, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Many are too wise to be led. Too proud to seek divine guidance. No wonder, therefore, if they go wrong. Let us lift up our eyes to our heavenly Father, put out the hand of our faith to be clasped in his, and say from the heart, "Lead me in the way everlasting." He would have God treat him as a pupil. As one waiting to be instructed, and willing to be taught.

Those who are afraid to go alone, will never be long without a sense of the divine presence ; and those who wish to be divinely led, will never be permitted to go far astray. Lead me,—that is carefully, for thus the Lord does. As Jacob could not allow Esau to remain with him after his reconciliation, lest his flock and family should be overdriven, so the Lord will not allow his own people to be hurried on by the prince of darkness, or others under his influence, to their endless destruction. Sweetly it is said of Jesus, “ He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead the burdened ones.” He leads gently just as his charge can bear, and he carries them when they cannot walk. Having begun to lead, he never forsakes, but leads from grace to glory, from earth to heaven. He leads us from the world to his church, from ourselves to the cross. The Holy Spirit always leads us to Jesus, who is “ the way, the truth, and the life ;” and

leads us to the Father through him. O Lord, search us, try us, expose to us, (not to others,) every wicked way that is within us, and lead us in the way everlasting. See then, what a honest man dreads,—deception. He would not be deceived for the world, for a thousand worlds. Nor would he deceive others. He is not satisfied without good evidence. No foundation will do for him but the Rock. No way but the way everlasting. No witness, but that of God's Spirit. No testimony, but what proceeds from God's own mouth. See also what a true believer seeks,—to be searched, to be tested: and to be searched and tested by God himself, who cannot be deceived, and who will never deceive. He is not satisfied with the verdict of his own conscience, much less with that of his partial friends, therefore he appeals to God to whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid, and prays to be thoroughly searched. Have we this evidence of being true and genuine believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? Every real

believer wants personal satisfaction that he is in the right road, that he is making progress in that road, and shall safely reach the end of his journey, to spend a eternity in his Father's kingdom. The saint espies an everlasting way, a way in which the wisest have walked, where safety is found, and walking in which all blessings are secured for time and eternity. Having made this discovery, no other way will do for him. He must be found in Christ. He must walk in this living way. At least he should miss it, or wander from it, he pleads with God to lead him in it. The true Christian seeks to be led by an infallible Guide, into an everlasting way, to take possession of an everlasting kingdom. Reader, is this your case? Have you been reading your own experience? Have I laid open your heart? Have you given expression to the rooted, abiding and lively desires of your soul? God says, "Take heed that your heart be not deceived." Jesus said, "Let no man deceive you." Paul says "Be not deceived.

Then there must be danger to call for such cautions, admonitions, and exhortations, as those we find in the Divine word on this subject. But should you be deceived! Suppose this for one moment, you thought you were right, but your heart deceived you. You rested upon the testimony of man, but he misled you. You live in false security, and die under the influence of false confidence. Like some spoken of by our Lord, you fancied you were going to heaven; you had no doubt but you should be admitted into the kingdom, and therefore you cry, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But he will say, "I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity." The mere supposition is dreadful, and yet it is to be feared there are thousands in such a state. They have no doubts, therefore they never pray to be reached. They have no fears, and therefore they never cry unto God to try them. Fully satisfied, they go on without any natural evidence of a change of heart; sink into *carnal* security, and die

calmly under the influence of an awful delusion. Rather than this, may we be shaken by temptations, harrassed by Satan, tossed with tempests of affliction and trouble. Rather than this, may God search us, however painful the operation : may he try us, however piercing the process ; may he expose us to ourselves, whatever distress it may occasion us. Now, while the fountain is open—now, while the invitation is given, and while mercy may be obtained—"Lord, search us, try us, and lead us to Jesus."

"If secret fraud should dwell
Within this heart of mine,
Purge out, O God, that cursed leaven,
And make me wholly thine

"If any rival there
Dares to usurp the throne,
O tear th' infernal traitor thence,
And reign thyself alone.

"Is any lust conceal'd ?
Bring it to open view ;
Search, search, dear Lord, my inmost soul,
And all its powers renew."




GIVING.

THE very title of this piece will be enough for some. "There is no end to giving," they will say; "we are tired of applications: write on some other subject." No; this is our subject—this is our present theme. But before entering upon it, let us ask the complainer, Are you tired of receiving? Is it true, or is it not, that the Lord's mercies are "new every morning"? Does he daily load you with his benefits? Have you received one favour too many? Can you wish that the Lord should get tired of giving? Suppose he should say, "I have given him health so long, money so often, innumerable comforts for so many years, I am tired of giving, I will give him no more;" and suppose an angel was despatched from his throne to tell you this, how would you feel? Yet it would only be acting on your own principle, and manifesting the

same spirit as you manifest. But you are not tired of giving. Oh, no ; you intend to give more, to continue giving. Very well ; then let us pen a few thoughts on the subject : they *cannot* hurt you, they *may* do you good.

Who *enables* you to give ? What have you that you have not received ? The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, he gave you wealth, or talent, or opportunity to get. You have not one farthing for which you are not indebted to him. He gave, and he must continue to give ; or your brooks will soon dry up. He must preserve for you what he gives, or you will soon lose it. There are ways and means enough to deprive you of all you have, and they will be successful, unless he prevents you with the blessings of his goodness. Who *commands* you to give ? Thy Creator, who gave thee thy being. Thy Redeemer, who gave his life for thy ransom. Thy Comforter, who gave thee life when dead in sin, and comfort when dejected and cast down. Thy


God, who gave thee life, and breath, and all things. He who holds you responsible for all he has given; who, when he gave, wrote on his gifts, "Use them, for my glory. Enjoy them, as one that is accountable for them. Improve them, for I intend to come and take account of my servants, to see how much every one has gained by trading *on my account*." Who notices your gifts? Your Father, to whom you have daily to pray. Your Judge, before whose judgment-seat you must stand-by-and-by stand. He sends the applicant to your door. He notices with what feelings you read or hear the application. He discerns the motives from which and the means by which you give. He who had his eye on the poor widow casting her two mites into the treasury of the Temple, has his eye on your heart, your property, and your gifts. His eyes are as a flame of fire, and no wonder if they flash with displeasure when some professors give to his poor cause. Who set the *example* of giving? He who spared not his own Son,



but delivered him up for us all. He who gives "grace and glory," and pledges his word that "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." He, "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich." "Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful." Imitate him, who not only gave to all applicants, "but who *went* about doing good." Believe him, for he spoke from experience when he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Your example is perfect,—copy it as near as you can: and if you meet sometimes with ingratitude, if sometimes you are deceived, remember he "causeth his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us do good unto all men, specially unto them that are of the household of faith."

The Lord *approves* of our giving; this ought to be sufficient. He wishes all his *children* to be liberal, like himself. He

would have them all trained up "to give to him that needeth." He hates covetousness; he despises the niggardly; he abhors selfishness. Covetousness is ranked with idolatry in his own word, and the "lovers of their own selves" are placed among the apostates of the last days. Two whole chapters (2 Cor. viii. and ix.) are taken up in urging the duty of liberality, in prompting the Lord's people to give; while no other duty in the whole code of Christian morals has such attention paid to it by the inspiring Spirit. The Lord well knew the natural covetousness of the human heart; he well knew the excuses men would frame, and how they would attempt to put this duty from them; and therefore the prominence he gives it, and the arguments by which he enforces it. The Lord has *promised* to reward giving, "The liberal soul shall be made fat." "Give, and it shall be given unto you." He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that



receiveth a righteous man, in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." See also, Matt. xxv. 34, 40. Occasionally, like Moses, we may have "respect unto the recompense of the reward," but generally it should not be so; the love of Jesus should constrain us, zeal for his glory should urge us, and a sense of our accountability should impel us. But alas! too many forget, if they really believe, that they are accountable for all they get, and how they get it; for all they spend, and how they spend it; for all they give, and to what end they give it; for all they keep, and why they keep it. The doctrine of giving, as laid down in the New Testament, as practised by the primitive Church, is certainly not understood or admired in our day as it should be. What should we think of a people praying a minister of Christ, with

much entreaty, to receive a gift, in order to dispense the same for the comfort of the Lord's poor, or the furtherance of the Lord's cause, as we read that the believers at Macedonia did? 2 Cor. viii. 1, 5. It is because we sow sparingly, that we reap sparingly. It is because some give so little, that they have so little enjoyment of what they keep. The Lord not only blesses what we give when we give from a good motive, and in proportion to our means; but he blesses what we keep, and "the blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." The Lord has *published* to the world that he considers himself the liberal man's debtor: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." But how few appear satisfied with the security! How few, at least, act as if they were! Everything is to us just what God makes it; if, therefore, we keep when we ought to give, we shall find that "he that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver,

nor he that loveth gold with increase." Oh, that the professors of the present day did but believe the inspired statement, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which *drown men* in destruction and perdition. *For the love of money is the root of all evil*, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and *pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*" 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10; and that of our adorable Saviour, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Reader! are you liberal? Do you give up to your means? Look around you; there are many of God's creatures need help; have you the means, have you the heart to help them? There are many of God's children who are needy, and Jesus takes what is given to them as given to himself. Can you let them want, while you lay up? Why, perhaps what you

thus put by may have the Lord's curse rest upon it; and then it may only be fuel for your children's lusts, or temptations to lead them into sin. There is God's cause; chapels have to be built, ministers supported, missionaries sent to the heathen, Bibles and tracts distributed, and a number of other things to be attended to, all of which call for money. And the money called for, the Lord's people *ought* to furnish. It is given them for the purpose, and they are now put upon their trial. They are stewards and it always looks suspicious when stewards die rich.

Who, then, *refuses* to give,—to give up to the full amount of his means? What is he? An honest man? A faithful man? A gracious man? A Christian, or a Christ-like man? *How can it be?* Is it honest to lay up what he ought to lay out? Is it faithful to appropriate another's property to our own purposes? Is it gracious to withhold from God, to gratify self? Is it Christ-like, to hoard or spend in flesh-pleasing what we are entrusted

wish to further the Lord's cause? Surely, no. Then, if we have any regard for God's command—if we wish to please our Saviour—if we would rejoice the hearts of the poor saints—if we would encourage the Lord's ministers—if we would send the Gospel to the perishing heathen—if we would secure our Master's approbation, or prepare for the plaudit of "Well done, thou good and faithful servant," let us attend to the injunction of Immanuel, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Let us lay our gold and silver by our coffin, let us weigh them at the grave's mouth, let us estimate their value in the light of eternity, and then go forth and act under the impression produced. May the Holy Spirit give us all the mind that was in Christ Jesus, and so fill us with love to him, and zeal for his glory, and sympathy with perishing souls, that we may give freely, frequently, cheerfully, and up to the highest point of our ability! This would be to answer the end of our creation, *redemption*, and sanctification. This would

please God, benefit our fellow men, and bring honour to ourselves. This would make us resemble the greatest, most glorious, and most useful productions of God's power: as an old author writes,—

“The sun gives ever;—so the earth—
What it can give, so much 't is worth;
The ocean gives in many ways—
Gives paths, gives fishes, rivers, bays;
So, too, the air it gives us breath—
When it stops giving, in comes death.
Give, give, be always giving;
Who gives not is not living.
The more we give,
The more we live.

“God's love hath in us wealth upheap'd,
Only by giving it is reap'd;
The body withers, and the mind,
If pent in by a selfish rind.
Give strength, give thought, give deeds, give
pelf.
Give love, give tears, and give thyself.
Give, give, be always giving;
Who gives not, is not living.
The more we give,
The more we live.”





AM I IN THE RIGHT ROAD?

A very necessary question this; for if we are not in the right road, we shall never arrive at the place we wish for. But it is not a question to be proposed to *any one*, for there are many that do not *know* the road. And before any judicious person would attempt to answer it, he would ask two or three more.

Where do you wish to go? If you answer, "*To Heaven*," no question can be more important. So you really wish to go to heaven! That is, you wish to be perfectly holy,—to have all your evil habits corrected, all your sinful customs conquered, all your carnal indulgences overcome,—to be full of love to God, and to every one by whom you are surrounded,—to have God enthroned in your heart,—to praise him without ceasing,—to be as like him as a creature can be like his Creator. This is heaven. For though

there is a *place* called heaven, heaven is rather a *state* than a place. Any place would be a heaven if God were present, and if our souls were prepared to adore his perfections, perform his will, and enjoy his manifestations. Is this what you mean by heaven? Do you really wish to be made perfectly holy, to arrive at the place of God's throne, and to spend an eternity in his worship and service? If so, let me now ask,—

What course do you pursue? Is the Bible your directory? Is the worship of God your element? Is the Lord Jesus Christ to you "*a way?*" He says, "*I am the way, no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" A way, you know, is that which lies between us and the place we wish to go to, and which leads us to it. Transfer this figure to a person, and he is a *mediator*—one that comes between God and us, and through whom we may approach God, and be admitted into the presence of God. Now, a road is of no use to us, if we do not venture on it, pass along

it, and strive to arrive at the end of it. So Christ profits us nothing, if we do not come to him, venture our souls on him, and come to God and glory by him. Christ is as necessary, in order to our access to God, acceptance with God, and admission into the glorious presence of God, as a road is to lead us to a place. A road which we never use, is of no advantage to us; so if we have no faith in Christ, no personal dealings with the blood of Christ, no fellowship with God through Christ, he is of no saving advantage to us. God will not admit us into his presence but through Christ; he will not hear our prayers, if they are not offered in the name of Christ; he will not allow us to enter heaven, if we are not washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of Christ. The question, then, is, are you in Christ? Or, are you coming unto God by Christ? Or, is Christ to you, in reference to heaven, what a good road is in reference to a place you want to go to? Again I may ask,—

What companions do you meet with in the road you are taking? Are they saints or sinners? Are they spiritual or carnal? "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Now, if your road is thronged with travellers, if they are natural, or merely moral men, you are not in the right road. You can tell saints from sinners by their *talk*,—they speak of the glorious majesty of Christ's kingdom, and talk of his power;—by their *walk*,—they walk in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord;—by their *spirit*,—for the Spirit of God dwelleth in them;—by their *grand object*,—for they aim to glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are God's. Now, are your companions and associates such? Do you wish to associate with the good and holy at all times and everywhere? Can you say with David, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and walk in thy statutes?" Once more I may ask,—

What objects do you see before you? Are the examples of the saints set up in your path? Is Christ, as the great pattern to be constantly met with? Is perfect holiness the mark you aim at? Is there a sparkling crown in the distance, promised to every overcomer? Are you now passing through a land of briers and thorns, through a wilderness of difficulties and dangers, with the glorious land in view? Do you live anticipating the coming of the Lord Jesus, as the Sovereign of his church, and the Judge of all? If so, no question but you are in the right road. If you live by the faith of the Son of God, if you walk in love, if your way is the way of holiness, if your grand object is to glorify God now, that you may enjoy him for ever, you *are* in the right road.

But is this the case? Are you in the right road? For if you are not, you will never reach heaven. There is no path to heaven, but the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no walking in him, but by a living *faith*. There is no living faith, where

there is not holiness of heart and life. If you should be in the wrong road, every step you take will lead you farther and farther from God, and, consequently, farther and farther from heaven; so that at the close of life, which may now be near, you will be farther from heaven than you were at the beginning of it; and at death you will be farther from heaven than at any period in your whole life. This is a solemn, a fearful thought. It calls for self-examination, for immediate investigation. We are either in the road to heaven, or in the road to hell; and every day we make some progress; so that we are nearer to heaven or hell every night that we lie down upon our pillows. We never were so near to heaven as now, if we are in the right road; but we never were so near to hell as now, if we are in the wrong road. Holy Spirit! throw light upon our minds, throw light upon our path, that we may know whether we are in the right road, or in the wrong!

Dear reader, ponder this question. As-

certain the fact. Come to a certainty upon this point, for of all points this is of the greatest consequence. If you are in the right road, press forward in it; if you are not, seek it, nor ever rest until you realize beyond a doubt that you are in it.

“ Lord God, omnipotent to bless,
 My supplication hear,
 Guardian of Jacob, hear my voice,
 Incline thy gracious ear.

“ If I have never yet begun,
 To tread the sacred road,
 O teach my wandering feet the way
 To Zion's blest abode!

“ Or, if I 'm travelling in the path,
 Assist me with thy strength,
 And let me swift advances make,
 And reach thine heaven at length.

“ My care, my hope, my first request,
 Are all comprised in this,
 To follow where thy saints have led,
 And then partake their bliss.”





SETTLING ACCOUNTS.

SOME people are very ready to run into debt, but are very backward in settling their accounts. In this way tradesmen are troubled, and credit is lost. Such persons pay little regard to Paul's precept, "Owe no man anything." They disregard the Saviour's rule, "Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you." They violate God's law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." All should keep out of debt, if possible, and those who are in debt, should get out as soon as they can. No man can be honest who is not anxious to avoid debt, or to pay it. If a man is not honest, can he be a christian? Yet many professors are in debt, but feel no uneasiness about it; how is this? Debts bind us morally, even when they cannot be demanded legally. God holds a man accountable, after man has settled his affairs, if *all his debts* are not fully

paid. Because a professor has passed the court, he ought not to think that he has cast off his obligations. He is still bound by God's word to pay every farthing as soon as ever he has the means. These thoughts were suggested by the remark that was made the other day, "Mr. —, you have not settled your account yet."

Reader, we have all accounts to settle, for we are all deep in debt. We have owed God a debt of perfect obedience to his holy law, from childhood until now; but have we ever paid a fraction of it? Have we been at all uneasy about it? Are we anxious now? If we are really in debt, we ought to pay it. How can we be honest without? Let us, then, look at the matter a little more closely. Every time we neglect a duty, we contract a debt. Every time we violate a precept, we commit a crime. Now, how many duties have we neglected? and how often, and for how long, have we neglected them? We ought to have loved God *with all our hearts, through the whole of*

our lives; but have we? We ought to have believed God, every word he has said, whether a promise or a threatening; but have we? We ought to have worshipped God, and to have worshipped him in spirit and in truth; but have we? We ought to have done every individual thing which God has commanded, and to have avoided everything which he has prohibited; but have we? What say our bibles, our closets, our consciences? Ah, what do they say? Do they not say, that we owe God years of love, faith, worship, and obedience? Is there not a long account between God and our souls to be settled sometime? Does this ever make us uneasy? Does conscience never say, "*You have not settled your account yet?*" A day is coming, which has been set apart for settling these accounts; and every one who has not settled this account before, will be held responsible for the whole then. All the deeds done in the body must be accounted for. What account can we give?

But suppose a spark of honesty is found in our hearts, and a desire rises to settle our accounts with God, what can we do? Can we pay the past arrears? No, that is impossible. Can we compound with God? Will He admit of a compromise? No, never. He never did come to a compromise with sinners, and he never will. The whole debt must be paid, the account must be so settled, that Justice can write at the bottom of your bill, "*Received in full of all demands.*"

But, how can this be? Not by the performance of duties. Not by the enduring of torments. Not by shedding tears. No; by thy own efforts or sufferings at all. But God will admit a surety, he will allow one to answer for thee, he will permit another to discharge thy debt. That other is the Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten and well-beloved Son. He knew our case, he sympathised with our circumstances, and he undertook to restore that which he took not away. He assumed our nature, came into our world, obeyed

the law as our substitute, and made an atonement as our sacrifice. His person was accepted instead of ours, his obedience instead of ours, his death instead of ours; and God, to whom we are indebted, has agreed that every one that believes in Jesus, confesses sin at his throne, and pleads his name before his mercy-seat, shall be instantly, fully, and eternally forgiven. His accounts shall be settled. His bill shall be crossed. His receipt shall be given. The gospel is heaven's grand insolvent act, for the full, perfect, and eternal release of every insolvent debtor, who is willing to take advantage of its provisions. We want our readers, therefore, to settle their accounts with God. To settle them at once. So that if any one of his servants should say, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" you may answer at once, "Nothing." And if any objection be raised, be able to shew your receipt on heaven's own stamp, written in the indelible blood of your Surety.

Well, reader, *what say you?* Are you not

in debt? Do you wish, as an honest man, that all your debts should be paid? Are you willing that the Son of God should be your paymaster? If so, think upon your ways, and compare your works, words, thoughts, and nature, with God's most holy law. Pray that the Holy Spirit may thoroughly convince you of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Go in private and bow before the Lord, confess your sins, plead the person, work, blood-shedding and name of Jesus. Place your confidence in the word of Jesus, who has said, "He that believeth in me shall never perish, but shall have everlasting life." Do this heartily, honestly, and your debt is paid, your account is settled, and your discharge is signed. God, for Christ's sake has forgiven you all trespasses. But neglect this, live without it, and the whole debt will stand against you in God's book, you will be held responsible for every farthing, and God will demand the settlement of your account at the judgment-seat of Christ. Then your Lord, in his

wrath, will deliver you to the tormentors, till you shall pay all that is due unto him (Matt. xviii. 34). If you refuse to settle your account under the insolvent act of sovereign grace, you will live to learn the fearful meaning of our Lord's words, "The adversary will deliver thee to the judge, and the judge will deliver thee to the officer, and thou shalt be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, *Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing*" (Matt. v. 16, 25). Now, God is good, and *ready to forgive*; then he will be strictly just, and severely punish. Can this be wrong? Your conscience answers, "*No.*"

"Fly ye sinners to yon mountain,
Where the healing streams do flow,
There you 'll find an open fountain,
That will wash you white as snow.

"Richly flowed the crimson river,
Down Immanuel's lovely side;
And that blood will you deliver,
Whosoever 'tis applied."




WHEN AM I TO OBTAIN THE SALVATION OF MY SOUL?

WHAT a mercy it is for a sinner to be spared until now, when God might have justly cut him down, and consigned him to eternal torments. But why has God spared me? Surely he has some kind and gracious design in it. Is it not to prove that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner? Does it not show that he is gracious, merciful, and long suffering? Surely he is not willing that any should perish, or he would have cut me down, and sent me to hell for my sins! But here I am, with a new portion of time put into my hands; and now let me seriously consider one question,—“*When am I to obtain the salvation of my soul!*” What question can be more solemn or reasonable than this?

Salvation is a blessing—a great blessing, the greatest blessing God can give or man receive. It is the opposite of man's desert, for every man, as a sinner,

deserves damnation. *Damnation! What is that?* It is banishment from God. It is separation from all holy and happy beings. It is to be deprived of hope, and to be delivered over unto black despair. It is to be tormented by one's own conscience, by Satan and his angels, and by the dreadful frown of God *for ever*. Damnation is the essence of misery, the perfection of woe, the most dreadful kind of suffering. It will have its seat in the soul, but will fill with anguish, agony, and torment, every part of the body. Salvation is the enjoyment of the presence, smile and favour of God. It is union to, and fellowship with, all the holy, happy, and dignified beings in creation. It is the end of faith, the object of hope, and the eternal satisfaction of love. It is the essence of pleasure, the perfection of happiness, and the fulness of satisfaction. Salvation raises us from the gates of hell to the throne of heaven; delivers us from the dreadful, and puts us in possession of the desirable: it elevates human nature to the highest pitch of holiness, happiness, and honour.

And can I be saved? Yes, there is no doubt of it. *Who will save me?* The Lord Jesus Christ. *How will he save me?* Freely, or gratuitously. *How can I obtain salvation?* By seeking it at his throne, by submitting to his method, by receiving his glorious work. Jesus says to you, "Seek, and ye shall find,"—"Seek ye me and ye shall live." You are a sinner, do you *admit* that? Do you heartily *believe* it, and believe it because God tells you so in his holy word? Do you *feel* it? Do you *desire* to be delivered from the power, love, guilt and consequences of sin? Are you *willing* to be saved in God's way? If so, you can be saved, you may be saved. Go to Jesus; he is on the throne of grace; go just as you are; go, and using your own words, ask him in mercy to save your soul,—to save you freely, fully, immediately,—to save you for his own glory. Tell him that you are willing to be saved in his own way; that you are prepared to submit to his righteousness. Exercise confidence in



his word. Put your trust in his blood, which cleanseth from all sin ; in his righteousness, which justifies from all things ; in his intercession, which always prevails with God ; and *you are saved*. You are saved the moment you believe. That is, the moment you withdraw your dependence from your own works, renounce yourself entirely, and venture simply, alone, and altogether on the word, work, and precious blood of the Lord Jesus. This is the way in which God saves sinners. In this way any sinner may be saved. In this way *you* may be saved, and saved this moment. Jesus Christ provides all, and you receive it. He presents all in his gospel, and you accept it. He does the work, you get the benefit, and he receives the praise.

If, therefore, you put the question, "When am I to obtain the salvation of my soul?" the answer is, Whenever you are heartily willing to do so. Whenever you are stripped of self, prepared to renounce your own righteousness, and made

heartily willing to receive salvation as a free gift, it may be said to you, "This day is salvation come to your house, to your heart." Blessed day! But when shall it be? When will it be? Did you enter upon this day as a lost and ruined sinner or as a sinner saved by grace? If you have entered upon it as a lost soul, will you continue in such a situation? What! with a Saviour close at hand? With an invitation to come and be saved sounding in your ears? With life waning, death approaching, the grave opening, and eternity, with all its dread solemnities, ready to burst upon you? Your soul *may* be saved. You may obtain the salvation of your soul *now*. But if you trifle, if you wait for a more convenient time, if you will not give up the pleasures and practice of sin, you perish. You perish for ever. You perish by your own hand. You die a suicide, and will go to hell eternally to reflect on your madness and folly. How long have you lived in sin? Just put in the number of years. Com-

plete this sentence, "I have lived in sin — years ; all that time I have been the enemy of God, and the enemy of my own soul ; but I do now deliberately determine, from this hour, to seek the salvation of my soul, and to seek it until I obtain it, and can say, I am saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation." Or if you will not, just be honest for once, and before the omniscient eye of God finish this, "I have lived in sin — years, and I do deliberately determine to go on in sin, to neglect the salvation of my soul, and dare the eternal God, whose mercy I refuse, to do his worst." But, stop ! before you sign your name to this, reflect, and in this thy day, before salvation is for ever hid from thy eyes, let me beseech you to seek the Lord, and obtain the salvation of your soul. At, remember this, and it is a solemn thought, whatever your hand may do, *your heart at this moment* agrees to, and is one of these sentences ! Which is Which ? Oh, which ?



A DUTY AND PRIVILEGE.

“Draw nigh to God.”—JAMES iv. 8.

SIN has placed us at a great distance from God, and left us wandering from God. Not only so, it has given us a dislike to God, and a distaste for the presence of God. So that naturally we try to avoid God. If we could get from under his eye, out of the reach of his hand, or from under his authority, nothing would please us better. Religion is nearness to God. Grace convinces us of our distance, produces a desire for reconciliation, and leads us back to God. Real prayer is drawing nigh to God. Not the mere performance of a duty; but coming before God—to hold intercourse with God. Therefore the apostle says,—“Draw nigh to God.” Jehovah is the object we are to approach, and in approaching him, we should think of three things. First, of what *he is*. Not *only* what he is in himself as the great,

the good, the glorious, the self-existent, the only God. But of what he is to us, in the person of his Son. He is our Father, and as such he wishes us to approach him, to worship, and adore his divine perfections. In coming to him as a Father, we have nothing to fear, but every thing to expect. His heart is a father's heart. His eye is a father's eye. He therefore looks upon us, listens to us, and feels for us, as a father does to his child—his beloved child. My soul, in coming to God, never forget that he is thy Father. Secondly, what *he has*. He has all thou canst want. He has all thou canst desire. The treasures of the universe are his. He possesses heaven and earth. We cannot exhaust his fulness. We cannot affect his wealth. Giving never impoverishes him, it never can. He has just what you want. He has all you want. He has it to part with. He feels pleasure in giving to his children. He delighteth in shewing mercy to them. Thirdly, what *he gives*. He gives grace.

The grace that justifies the person. The grace that sanctifies the nature. The grace that raises from the horrible pit and miry clay. The grace that is an antidote to all our diseases, wants, and woes. He gives glory—a robe of glory—a crown of glory—a throne of glory—a mansion of glory; the bright, the beautiful, the blessed; all that will make existence a blessing, and being a cause of joy. He withholds no good thing, whether it be temporal, spiritual, or eternal. He gives all that is needful for the body, or ornamental to the soul—all that is adapted to time, or necessary for eternity. As a Father he waits to be gracious, to listen to us, to bestow upon us, and glorify his unbounded benevolence in us. Let us then,

“*Draw nigh to God.*” The medium of approach is Jesus. We could not draw nigh to him as sinners, through the medium of the law, or the old covenant; but Jesus presents himself, and says, “I am the way.” We must go through him, if

we go acceptably, if we would go comfortably. He is the medium of access, as he is the sacrifice for our sins. He gave himself for us. He took our sins, our guilt upon himself. He stood for us, he suffered instead of us. Thus he satisfied justice, and honoured the divine government. God can now be just, and yet pardon, accept, and be a friend to us. In drawing nigh to God, we keep our eye on Jesus. On Jesus, as dying for our sins, and rising again for our justification. We feel confidence before God, because Jesus has removed all cause of offence, all occasion of wrath, by his obedience unto death. He is also our Intercessor. He is with the Father. He stands before the Father's throne. He is there for us to introduce our persons—to plead our cause—to present his blood on our behalf—to perfume our poor petitions. We go into the Father's presence through Jesus. The Father receives us, listens to us, smiles upon us, and blesses us for the sake of Jesus. Through Jesus we can

enter into the holiest, come even to Lord's seat, stand immediately before throne; his terror will not make us afraid; neither will his hand be heavy upon us. Let us, therefore,

"Draw nigh unto God." If we draw nigh to God, it must be in faith, and the faith must be confidence in God—confidence in his character, veracity, word; that he is gracious, merciful, abundant in goodness; that he is true and faithful; that his promises are as firm as the everlasting hills: so that we may say with John, "This is the confidence that we have in him, that if we will do any thing according to his will he hears us." We must draw near with fervour. The Lord hates lukewarmness; he loves to see energy, zeal, determination. "The energetic prayer of the righteous availeth much." But of what avail are the cold, or lukewarm prayers of the formalist? We must draw nigh for fellowship. To communicate to God, and receive communications from God.

have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Personal fellowship—sensible fellowship—heart-affecting fellowship. Fellowship which humbles the soul in the dust, fills it with self-loathing, and raises it in the exercise of faith, gratitude, and love. Fellowship which obliterates the image of Satan, and conforms us to the likeness of God—changing us into the same image, from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord. If there be faith in God's character and word—if there be genuine fervour in the soul—there will be fellowship with God; and if there be fellowship with God, there will be a taste of heaven below.

Let us then draw nigh to God in every trouble, and in every trial, with every cross, and for every blessing which we need. Never let us be satisfied to pass a day without getting near to the Lord. Let nearness to God in religious duties, in commercial engagements, in our every day employments, be our constant object.

O to live as in the immediate presence of God, that the heart may hourly ascend to him, consulting him upon all matters, conveying to him all our purposes, laying before him all our plans, and seeking his approving smile and blessing upon every enterprise! Nearness to God will preserve us from the power of Satan, the influence of the world, and the powerful corruptions of our hearts. Nearness to God will brighten our evidences, nurture our graces, and fit us for heaven. Let us, therefore seek, sigh for, nor rest, but as we enjoy nearness to God. Jesus is saying to us, "Let me see thy face, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Let us therefore say, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."





A SORROWFUL ENQUIRY.

"Why hidest thou thy face from me?"—Ps. lxxxviii. 14.

THIS psalm is full of deep and painful experience. None can understand its true spiritual meaning but souls deeply taught of God. It is supposed to refer to a very painful passage in Israel's history, even the oppression of Pharoah in the land of Egypt. It just meets the case of those who are left to sigh and suffer for a time in darkness, bondage, and unbelief. Such may find a companion here. One with whom they may have fellowship. One who utters sigh for sigh, groan for groan. But we are about to look at one cause of complaint. The Lord had hidden his face. The Scriptures often clothe the Divine majesty with our parts and passions, to convey instruction to our minds, and make impression upon our hearts. God is a spirit, but God is also a Father, *our Father*: and, as such, speaks to us of

himself in terms and by figures which can understand.

The face of God being towards us, God's smiling on us, sometimes refer to providence, sometimes to grace, and sometimes to both. We take it here as referring to his dealings with us in general. To turn the face to us implies two things. First, *attention*: when he looks he listens; he looks kindly while he listens attentively. But sometimes he appears to disregard us; we call upon him, we plead with him, we spread our petitions before him, we present our petitions to him; but, there is no sense of his presence, no proof of his attention, no evidence of his regard. Praying is like speaking to the wall. Our utterances rebound, and come back upon us. There is no access into his presence, no liberty at his throne, no freedom at his mercy-seat. Secondly, *approbation*:—When we are approved, we look upon the person, the countenance is clothed with a smile. So the Lord sometimes seems sensible

smile upon us. We have an inward sense of his approbation. We feel that he is at peace with us. We are satisfied that he loves us. We can make free before him. "Perfect love casteth out fear." But, at other times, there is no smile. No sense of the presence or approbation of God. A painful distance is felt. The soul is straitened. The spirit is dry. Faith becomes feeble. Hope falters. A gloom spreads over the soul. Like the earth, when the sun is beclouded, a deep shadow settles over the whole of the inner man. The face of our God is hidden, a sense of his approbation is withheld. Thirdly, *communication* :—When we converse with a person, we turn the face to, and look at that person. So the Lord sometimes comes to hold converse with his people. He turns his face to them, and communes with them. He reveals no new truths, for all he has to say to us is in his written word. But, scripture is brought before the mind. It just suits the case. It is accompanied with

light and unction, so that we see its meaning and its beauty, and our hearts are sweetly softened by it. It is "like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest." Then we feel it to be the word of God, indeed. We need no other proof of its inspiration. We have the witness in ourselves. But when the Lord hides his face, there are no divine communications. There is no life, savour, or unction in the word. We read, we pray, we hear the gospel, our understandings approve, but our hearts are void, waste, and dissatisfied. Unless the Lord unveil his face to us, or turn and look upon us, we have no inward sense of Divine attention or approbation, nor are any soul-satisfying communications made to us. Like the affectionate child, we are troubled if our Father hides his face from us.

Why hidest thou thy face from me? We do not always know the cause, but there is one. We are sure to be happy if our souls are at all in a healthy state. We are filled with ardent longing to

know the reason and to see his face again. Three causes may be assigned for his hiding his face from us. First, *he is grieved with us*. We have by our spirit or conduct grieved his loving heart. He feels our sins. He acutely feels our ingratitude. When his mercies are not prized, when his ordinances are slighted, when his book lies unopened, when his throne is neglected, or our prayers and praises are dry, formal, and customary, he is grieved with us. It once "repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." It never repents him that he has made us his children, but it grieves him when we act so unworthy of the honour, and so basely repay his love. Second, *he intends to quicken us*. We have, perhaps, got dull and heavy. The sunbeams have made us sleepy. Like the spouse, we have washed our feet, put off our armour, and laid down for a nap (Song v. 1, 8). Now the Lord withdraws, or hides his face, he is displeased with us he intends to quicken

us. He gives us intimation of his drawal. We soon feel that we are alone. We want to hold intercourse with him, but he is gone. Now the soul begins to rouse, and shake itself from the dust. Grief, sorrow, grief, disquietude, and fear, doubt, and self-condemnation follow. The heart is wounded. The soul is restless. The conscience accuses. Memory presents the picture of former happy days, and we "remember God and are troubled; we complain, and our soul is overwhelmed." Thirdly, *he means to deepen his work in us.* As the true winter strikes its roots downward, and takes a firmer grasp of the soil, so the work of God within us deepens often when the Lord hides his face from us. We turn more attention to the work of the Blessed Comforter within. We sow to the Spirit. Hope feels for the rock, and will assure that the anchor has hold on it. Faith grasps the promise more firmly, and looks to Jesus more simply and entirely. *Penitence* lays the soul deeper in the

than ever. Penitence opens afresh the wounds of the broken heart, and mourns. Love sighs, sobs, and searches for the Beloved One. Submission bows the head, and owns that God is righteous. Joy is clothed in sack-cloth. Peace, like the bulbous plant in winter, is hidden deep in the heart. Patience, with meek eye and mild countenance, says, "I will wait for the Lord, that hideth himself from the house of Israel, and I will look for him." The whole of the inner man is roused to action, gathers strength, and is improved by exercise. Thus the Lord at times deepens his work, and makes the soul more susceptible of Divine impressions, more zealous in God's cause, more jealous of itself and fearful of grieving its heavenly Father; more watchful against sin, Satan, and the world. Now, as Hezekiah, the man "goes softly," and proves the truth of his words, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and cause me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bit-

terness ; but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption ; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." No settling upon the lees now. No sinking into Laodicean lukewarmness now. The soul " thirsteth for God, for the living God ?" and cries out with feeling and with fervour, " When shall I come, and appear before God." The prayer that ascends to the throne now is, " Cause thy face to shine upon thy servant, O save me, for thy mercy sake."

Reader, do you know anything of this experience ? All true christians do more or less, *but only christians do*. There are hundreds of professors who are total strangers to every thing of the sort. It is not our province to condemn them, but we should be very sorry to be found in their case. In the light of the Lord's countenance " there is life, and his favour is like the dew upon the grass ;" or " like a cloud of the latter rain." It satisfies, quickens, refreshes, strengthens, and *causes* us to grow. If the Lord hide his

face, "we are troubled." In prayer, we must have attention. In the holy place, we want the inward sense of his approbation. In ordinances, we want Divine communications. If there is no oil from the olive-tree, if there is no rain from the clouds, if there is no light and heat from the sun, or, without a figure, if there is no fellowship and communion with God in duties and in privileges, we are, we must be, dissatisfied, restless, and enquiring. The soul will be sure to cry out, "Lord, why castest thou off my soul? Why hidest thou thy face from me?" O to enjoy more of the light of the Lord's countenance, for

"Thy shining grace can cheer,
This dungeon where I dwell;
'Tis paradise when thou art here;
If thou depart, 'tis hell.

The smilings of thy face,
How amiable they are!
'Tis heaven to rest in thine embrace,
And no where else but there."



CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY.

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"—JER. ix. 1.

JEREMIAH has been called the weeping prophet. He was unquestionably a man of deep feeling. He was a thorough Jew. He was as thorough a christian, believing in Messiah to come, as we believe in Jesus who has appeared. He loved his nation ; he pitied his people. Though he sympathised with God who punished them, he sympathised with them, also, under all their privations and calamities. Whoever wrote such bitter words, from such a sorrowful heart as Jeremiah ! How deep are his feelings, and how touching his exclamation, now before us ! "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Here is—

First, an affecting sight. The Jews

slain by Nebuchadnezzar and others. The destruction was merciless, the massacre was dreadful, the sight was calculated to produce the greatest sorrow and grief. No respect was paid to age or station; the sword devoured one as well as another. Jerusalem was turned into an Aeldama, a field of blood. God's wrath was poured out; his long-suffering was exhausted; and now his awful threatenings were fulfilled. It was "a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." The prophet heard the sound of the trumpet, the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying. He saw desolation ride in triumph through the land, and the slain lay everywhere in heaps: his heart was almost broken, and with deep emotion he cried out, "Oh, that my head were waters!" Brethren, is there any similarity between his circumstances and ours? Not literally, but spiritually there is. If the eye of the mind were as quick to discern as the eye of the body is, what should we see? See

ourselves surrounded by the slain of the daughter of our people. Even literally, we are almost surrounded by the graves of those who have been cut down by the relentless hand of death; and spiritually, look which way we will, there are the slain. We are surrounded on every hand by those who are dead in sin. Every city, town, village, and hamlet, is full of the dead. Every street, lane, and alley, contains the dead. Scarcely can we find "a house in which there is not one dead." Oh, the number of our fellow-countrymen who are in one sense dead, and in another, under sentence of death! Dead in sin, and sentenced to endless suffering and separation from God! Oh, how strange that there should be such indifference,—indifference in them as to their doom,—indifference in us as to their everlasting destiny! How great must be the hardening power of sin! One would think that our hearts were petrified, and literally turned into stone. What a strange *in-situation* they are under, to feel at ease

under such circumstances. Nor are we much less infatuated not to feel for them more than we do. They are "*the slain of the daughter of our people,*" flesh of our flesh, bone of our bone. Our brothers and sisters in nature, as well as our fellow-citizens, and fellow-countrymen. *What* slew them? Sin. *Who* slew them? The offspring of sin, Death. *Who* delivered them up to such a fearful doom? The justice of God. *Who* is the Nebuchadnezzar that rejoices and triumphs in their destruction? Satan, the cruel serpent, the merciless old lion, who "goeth about seeking whom he may devour." What an affecting sight, to see thousands, tens of thousands, millions, of our brothers and sisters, all around us, slain by sin, and doomed to endless woe. One would think that we should daily feel like the noble-minded Esther, when she exclaimed, "How can I endure to see the evil that shall come unto my people? or, how can I endure to see the destruction of my kindred?" But, alas! such feelings seldom

fill our breasts, or influence our conduct; we are rather like the ostrich in the wilderness, destitute of feeling or concern. But here is,—

Secondly, *an affected heart*. “Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.” He saw the state of his countrymen already slain; he realized the danger of those who were left; he pitied their sad condition; he sighed over their sorrows; he desired their escape; and he prayed for their salvation. Brethren, is this our case? Are our hearts affected? What numbers have died in sin all around us during the last year; what hosts have gone down into hell from our country, from our towns, from our very doors. At the beginning of the year, we saw them, perhaps, as healthy and as likely to live as ourselves; but death came and cut them down. They *were* in the land of hope, but they are *now* in the regions of despair. Do we ever think of them? Do we ever

feel for them ? Do you say, “ It is of no use ? ” true, we can do *them* no good *now* ; but look all around us. By whom are we surrounded ? Is not every unconverted sinner under sentence of eternal death, and every moment in danger of dropping into hell ? We *know* their danger ; we *see* their state ; but do we *sympathise* with them ? Oh, the misery of their condition as the enemies of God, as led captive by the devil at his will ! But are we affected by their miserable state as we ought to be ? Suppose some modern Nebuchadnezzar were to take the town, and collecting together all the unconverted inhabitants were to chain them together with heavy chains, and lead them by your doors in gloomy procession, to inflict upon them dreadful and long-continued torment ; could you witness the sight, and not feel ? Among them you see the old inhabitant you have known from your childhood with his silvery locks ; the young men and women of your acquaintance ; and multitudes of boys and girls. Some of the


company your near neighbours, some of them your servants or fellow-workmen, and some of them your own children or other relatives. Supposing this to be the case, what kind of heart must you have not to feel? But is it not worse, infinitely worse, to see multitudes of all grades, and all classes, passing before your eyes to hell? What are the sufferings of earth to the horrors of hell? What the torments of time to the perpetual agonies of eternity? What the anguish of the body to the unutterable sorrows of a lost soul? And yet we do not sigh over these sorrows. We do not appear to desire their escape. If we did really sympathise with them, if we realised the tremendous character of their destiny, if we desired their escape, should we *could* we be so indifferent, so careless, about them? Could we live with them, and never warn them? Could we live by them, and make no effort for their rescue? Are our feelings like those of Jeremiah? Do we weep like him? Do we sigh like

him? Do we pray like him? Yet have we not cause, yea, greater cause than he had? Must we not say with the sons of Jacob, "We are, verily, guilty concerning our brethren?" But we have,—

Thirdly, *an affecting desire*. "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and for the slain of the daughter of my people." He would encourage deep feeling, give way to incessant weeping, and thus manifest his patriotism, pity, and anxiety for their welfare. Oh, brethren, does this at all represent the state of our hearts in reference to perishing sinners around us? Must it not rather be said of many, as in the days of Job, "They perish for ever without any regarding it?" Souls are daily, hourly perishing, but who regards it? Hell is filling; but who regards it? Satan is reaping a tremendous harvest; but who regards it? Every hour, every minute, every second, souls are sinking into hell; but who regards it? Where is our deep feeling? Where are our tears

for the lost? For those who are now perishing? Where is our patriotism, when Englishmen are sinking by thousands into perdition? Where is our pity when the human family are passing away from us in every direction to the regions of black despair? Where is our anxiety, even for our own flesh and blood? Wife, is thy husband unconverted? How dost thou feel? Husband, is thy wife unconverted? How dost thou feel? Child, is thy brother, thy sister, thy father, thy mother, unconverted? How dost thou feel? How many tears have we shed for the thousands who have perished during the past year? Friends, do you ever weep over perishing sinners? Is it not wonderful that we can walk the streets or sit in our houses without weeping? Is it not more wonderful that we can go to the house of God and pass the Sabbath breakers, profane swearers, harlots, and the multitudes of careless creatures that throng our streets, and never shed a tear? Is it not more wonderful still, that we can preach on the torments of the

lost, and the joys of the saved ; publish the glorious gospel of Christ, knowing that there is no salvation without receiving it, and see the great mass of the people around us rejecting it, yea, refusing to listen to it, and not weep bitter, bitter tears ? Would it be surprising if our places of worship were often turned into Bochim,—places of weeping over impenitent sinners ? Surely not. But we do not half believe what we preach or what we hear. We do not half believe the statements of Holy Scripture in reference to the awful realities of eternity and another world, or we must feel deeply, and weep frequently too. But do we now *wish* that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears, that we *may* weep for those perishing around us ? Or, would we rather go on in the same callous, unfeeling way that we have ? God forbid it. If we never shed tears over sinners perishing in their sins, we are not like Jeremiah, for he did. We are not like the blessed Apostle Paul, for he did.



Hence, speaking of his labours at Ephesus, he says, "*Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one day and night with tears*" (Acts xx. 31). We are not like our adorable Lord and Saviour, for when he came near to Jerusalem just before his death, passing over the Mount of Olives, where it came full in view, we read, "*He beheld the city, and wept over it*, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes." Oh, to feel as Paul felt! As Jesus felt! If we realized the danger of sinners, and the terrors of hell as they did, we should weep as they wept. But weeping is not enough. Feel we ought; but feeling should lead us to prayer. We should pray for sinners as if we saw them suspended over the burning lake, and one after another falling in,—as if we could hear the awful plash, as the lost soul takes its terrific plunge into the liquid flaming brimstone. Feel we ought; but feeling should lead us to

effort—personal effort—frequent effort,—hearty, soul-affecting effort. It should lead us to plead with them, as well as plead with God for them—to plead with them tenderly, lovingly, in good earnest—to plead with them as if we realized their danger, dreaded their doom, loved their souls, and would gladly do anything to snatch them as firebrands from the flames. It should lead us to strive to influence them, so as to bring them under the word, to believe the gospel, and to flee to the blessed Jesus for immediate salvation. We shudder when we read of the heathen seeing their neighbours and fellow-countrymen drowning, or perishing by other means, and not exerting themselves for their rescue. But are we better than they, if we see our friends, neighbours, and fellow-countrymen perish, perish for ever, and never attempt to rescue them? Yea, are we not worse than they, seeing we have the book of God in our hands, which says to us, “Others save with fear, plucking them out of the fire;”

which to encourage us adds, "Let him know, that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins?" Which sets before us as an example the Apostle Paul, who became a blessing to all men, that he might, "*by a means save some*;" who stooped as far as he could to every one's prejudices, that he might "*save the more*?" As the soul more valuable than the body, as eternity is more important than time, as the eternal death of the soul is worse than the natural death of the body, so we must be more blameable than the heathen if we can see sinners perish and never go out of our way, or stretch out a hand for their rescue. Oh, how unfeeling we are! How unlike the prophet! How unlike Paul! How unlike Jesus! Let us endeavor to realize it, to deplore it, to pray over it, and seek for grace to convert us from such an inconsistent state. Oh, Saviour, let thy blood wash out the blood of sinners; how deeply we are stained with it! As

when thou makest inquisition for blood, may not one drop of the blood of souls be found on our robes! Brethren, are we not guilty? Ought we not to repent? Is it not time for us to reform? Can we do better than at once to seek grace, that we may weep for souls, labour to save souls, and wherever we are, or whatever we do, keep one object in view, even to bring souls to Jesus? This is the path to honour, the road to renown, the way of holiness: this will bring glory to God, confusion on Satan, good to society, and comfort to ourselves. Activity for God, zeal for souls, anxiety to do good, always secures benefits for ourselves, while such a course must be crowned with the Divine blessing. Awake then, arise, and labour to bring sinners to Jesus!






THE GREAT DAY.

THERE have been many great days in world's history, but there is a day which will be greater than them therefore called emphatically "THE GREAT DAY." The Lord Jesus will then appear in great pomp and glory. Great numbers will be collected together before his throne even all that have ever lived in our world. The great distinction between the world and the church will then be made: great results will follow the decision of that day. The great white throne will be seen by all, the great Judge of the world will take his seat upon it, the great book will be opened, and the great multitude will be judged according to the truth which are written in the books. Every motive, every thought, every word, every action is recorded there; and every one will be judged according to his works. Reader, *you* will be there. Not

mere spectator, but as a party deeply interested in the proceedings of that day. You will then be judged, and be either welcomed to a kingdom prepared for the Lord's people, or be driven into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Which will it be? Have you ever thought? Have you ever endeavoured to ascertain? You *must* appear. It will be impossible to avoid it. Ought you not, then, to think of it, and prepare for it? That great day ought to awaken great *fears* in every sinner's heart. It will be dreadful to meet the Judge's eye, to face the witnesses, to hear the sentence, to endure the punishment of sin. It ought to make us very *careful*—careful to sue out our pardon—careful to be found in Christ, without spot and blemish careful to be recognised and acknowledged as the sons of God, and the obedient disciples of the Lord of glory. It ought to raise high *expectations* in the believer's soul. It will be a great day to him. He will receive great honour. He

will be robed with great glory. He will enjoy great happiness. He will be crowned with great distinction. It will be a great day to every one of us, both saint and sinner. Let us, therefore, seriously think of it, diligently prepare for it, and prayerfully anticipate it. It is near, it may be very near. Happy is the man who can look forward to it with confidence, and anticipate it with delight,—who is *now* justified by faith in Jesus,—who *daily* walks with God,—who *grows* in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour,—who can recognise in the Judge his friend, in the saints his brethren, and in the Most High God his father. To him “*the great day*” will be his best day; for after it there will be no more fears, no more pains, no more sorrows, no more sins. All will be peace, purity, power, and perfection.

My dear reader, will you make it a matter of prayer, that you may be prepared for that day? Will you let it occupy your thoughts, awaken your fears



influence your conduct, and regulate your pursuits? There is nothing that has so great a claim upon your thoughts as this. To neglect it, is to despise your own soul, to trifle with an eternity of woe, to yield to the cruel suggestions of the prince of darkness, and to go forward to that solemn scene without the least preparation. Can you be thus careless, inconsiderate, and unreasonable? Will you leave it until you come on a sick and dying bed, where, racked with pain, or faint with weakness, you need something to comfort you, and feel totally disqualified for thought, effort, or even prayer? Just dwell for a few moments on these solemn words of the apostle: "*We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that EVERY ONE may receive the things done in his body, ACCORDING to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" (2 Cor. v. 10, 11).

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A MINISTER TO HIS CONGREGATION.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—As you have placed yourselves under my ministry, I feel intensely anxious for your spiritual welfare, both as individuals and as a body. Allow me, therefore, with all affection to address a few lines to you. We are united together for a particular object, let us therefore, realize that object and keep it constantly in view. Our object is, to honour the Lord Jesus, to seek the advancement of our own personal religion, and to be a blessing to all who may come within the reach of our influence. We need deeper spirituality, more exact conformity to the Lord Jesus; let us daily, ardently, and importunately seek it. Our brethren need the same inestimable blessings; let us seek it also for them. We are surrounded by *thousands* who are total strangers to *experimental* religion; let us seek by *all means* to win them for Christ. Let

each one *try* every Lord's day to bring some one to the house of God, and then make that one the object of special prayer. Let each one *aim* to bring sinners to Christ, and when they are brought to Christ to introduce them into the Church. My friends, every one of us should feel, *much depends on me*: on my prayers, on my efforts, on my example, on my contributions to the cause. I encourage or discourage my Pastor and brethren continually. I am constantly exerting an influence for good or evil. I am doing good, or I am doing mischief, as a professor of religion, every day. Much, very much, depends on each one, whether he realizes it or no.

Brethren, I want each one of you to come to this conclusion. I have been too cold, too careless, too indifferent. I have lived too much *to* myself, and *for* myself; I will now endeavour to live more *to* and *for* the Lord. I will *feel* more for the *cause of God*, rejoicing in its prosperity, or mourning over its decline. I will *work*

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more for the cause, in order to increase the congregation, or add to the efficiency of the Church. I will *pray* more for the cause, setting apart special seasons to pray for my Pastor, my fellow members, the congregation, the teachers, and the school. I will daily endeavour to realise that the cause *may* flourish, and *will*, if the members seek its good : that the cause *may* decline, and *will*, if the members are negligent, selfish, or worldly. God has promised his Holy Spirit if we ask him, and when the Holy Spirit is poured out, there is brotherly love, spiritual union, well directed efforts, sympathy with suffering saints, powerful prayer, and great success. Without the Holy Spirit we are powerless; with the Spirit nothing is impossible. Let the presence, power, and operation of the Holy Spirit therefore be daily, heartily, importunately sought. Friend, having read this paper, do not put it away and forget it; but ponder its contents, place it where your eye will often rest upon it, once a week at least read it over, and come

his just, this holy, this honourable denunciation: "*Nothing on my part shall wanting to promote the peace, harmony, ease, and general prosperity of the church with which I have connected myself.*" Nothing on Satan's part will be wanting to prevent it, therefore let nothing on our part be wanting to promote it. God has promised, but having promised, and promised most positively, he has added, "I will yet for this be enquired of by the church of Israel, to do it for them: I will ease them with men like a flock." Let us therefore be often found upon our knees before God, pleading for the peace, unity, and increase of the Church. Then let him open the windows of heaven, and let us out a blessing.





A PASTOR TO HIS CHURCH.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—As we are only sent into this world for a short period, it is of great moment to enquire, “What am I placed in this world for?” As creatures, it is to glorify God. As sinners, it is to obtain salvation. As saints, it is for the good of others, and the honour of Christ. But do we keep these things prominently and permanently before our eyes? Let me entreat you to accompany me for a few moments into private, in order to examine seriously before God one question, namely, “*What am I living for?*” What is the distinct object which I have in view in my life? Do I live for Jesus? That is, to speak his truth, honour his name, extend his cause, and do his will? Is this my grand object? Do I live for the Church? To promote its happiness, add to its efficiency, and increase its members? Is this a part of my object? Do I live for sin-

ners? Realizing the danger of their condition, pitying their circumstances, striving to bring them to Christ, and fervently praying that the Holy Spirit would descend and crown every effort put forth for their conversion? Is this my object? Do I live to glorify God?—endeavouring to make known his true character, to remove the prejudices which sinners have against him, and to bring back as many of his rebel subjects as I can to their allegiance? Is this my object? Or, does the end for which I am living embrace distinctly these four points? Ought it not to be so? If it does not, *am I guiltless? Are you?*

My dear friends, too many of us are living to ourselves. We live to make money, or to spend money for our own gratification? Can we justify this? Sinners perish without our pity. The church calls in vain for extra efforts at our hands. We do not make the honour of Jesus, and the glory of God, the daily object of our pursuit. Is it then any wonder if our comfort is small, if our evidences are dim,

or if our fears prevail? Let us search into this matter thoroughly. Let us seek special grace *from* God, that we may so speak and so act as to bring great glory to God. Let us aim to come up to Paul's experience, who could say, "*For me to live is Christ.*" "I live for Christ. Christ is honoured in my life. The end of my being is to make known and exalt Christ." This is the direct road to happiness, honour, and God's throne. Let us then *every morning* propose this question, "*What shall I live for to-day?*" And let us demand of our consciences an answer to this *every evening*, "*What have I been living for to-day?*" Jesus lived and died for us on earth. and he is now living for us in heaven, let us therefore live for him. Living for Christ, we shall neglect no relative duty, nor miss the enjoyment of any Christian privilege; but shall at once honour our profession, benefit all about us, please God, be prepared for whatever may happen to us in life, and meet death with confidence and courage. Brethren! Sis-

ters? *What are you living for?* Is your present object that, which you will approve on the bed of death—that which God, conscience, and glorified saints will commend? *Is it?* Are you quite satisfied on the point? Let conscience say. Do not put the subject from you, your happiness, your holiness, your honour is involved in it. Jesus wishes you to be entirely devoted to his cause—to spend all your talents in his service—to seek by all means to promote his cause. He is worthy for whom you should do this. If you neglect, the time will come when you will wish you had done so. Regrets will be useless then. Throw, therefore, all your energies at once, and for all your days, into the work. This is what you are required to do; do it then with all your might. “*The night cometh.*”





QUESTIONS FOR MY FLOCK.

1. **ARE** you really converted to God? Is the life of God in your soul? Are you quite sure of this? Ought you to be satisfied without? "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." John iii. 3.

2. Are you living upon Christ? Is he your daily food—clothing—and comfort? "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, there is no life in you." John vi. 53. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. xiii. 14.

3. Are you living for God? Do you consider your time, money, influence, and varied talents the Lord's? "None of us liveth to himself,—we live unto the Lord." Rom. xiv. 7, 8.

4. Are you useful to your fellow creatures? Have you brought any to hear the gospel? Have you led any to the Lord Jesus? Did you ever try to do so? "I

am made all things to all men, *that I might by all means save some.*" 1 Cor. ix. 22.

5. Are you striving to be a blessing to the church—by your fervent prayers for it—by your good example before it—by your self-denying exertions for it? "I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, *but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*" 1 Cor xi. 33.

6. Are you a friend to the Sunday School? Do you contribute to its funds? Do you pray for the teachers? Do you ever try to increase it by looking out for, and sending children to it? "He that winneth souls is wise." Prov. xi. 30. But what is he that never attempts it?

7. Are you sympathizing with your Pastor? Do you try to increase his congregation, by inviting persons to come with you? Do you speak to strangers when they attend? Do you look out for enquirers and introduce them to him? Do you contribute anything toward his support? Do you ever go into your closet on purpose to offer up special prayer

for him? "We beseech you to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you: and to esteem them very highly in love for their work sake." 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Cor. ix. 14.

8. Are you regular in your attendance at the prayer meetings? Do you come to them in a prayerful spirit? Do you, when there, travail in birth for souls until Christ be formed in them, or are you a stranger to this holy and apostolic exercise of the soul? Do you believe the words of Jesus in reference to such meetings?" "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: FOR where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

Beloved, these questions are proposed to you out of a sincere desire for your

spiritual welfare. Are they not worthy of your attention? Do they not deserve your serious consideration? Ought they not to be honestly answered? Can your souls be in a good state if you are displeased with them, or carelessly cast them on one side? I am persuaded that your own happiness, and spiritual prosperity, and the prosperity of the cause of God among us, is bound up in them; and if you are alive to your responsibility, if you wish to grow in grace, and desire to see the cause of God flourish among us; you will take them into your closet, pray over them, examine your conscience by them, and endeavour to act in future under their influence. Love stimulated me to write them, therefore lovingly receive them, and may the Lord abundantly bless them. Grace and peace be with you.





A NEW YEAR.

How rapidly time flies! How fast eternity approaches! How solemn the circumstances in which we are placed! How great the work we have to do! May the Lord deeply affect our minds as we enter on this new period of time! O Lord, grant us the renewings of thy Holy Spirit! May we not carry the guilt of the past into the future, or remain unimproved by the discipline we have passed through! We may never see another New Year's Day! The decree may have gone forth, "This year thou shalt die." Before twelve months our bodies may be laid beneath the sod, and all opportunities of usefulness be gone for ever. Let us, therefore, endeavour to improve the present, and seek grace for the future. Let us set our hearts upon living to purpose, that so, when we shall be called hence, we may leave proofs behind us that we have not lived in vain.

A New Year's Day calls upon us to review the past. Can we do so without sorrow—without shame? Look at the duties we have neglected. The closet cries, "You have neglected me." The sanctuary cries, "You have neglected me." The Bible cries, "You have neglected me." The habitation of the widow cries, "You have neglected me." The chamber of the sick cries, "You have neglected me." And to some the Sunday-school cries, "*You* have neglected me." How much more time might have been given to the Lord! How many more tracts we might have distributed! How many times we might have spoken of Jesus, and for Jesus, when we have not! Oh, what opportunities of usefulness we have lost, and lost for ever! How much time, and especially Sabbath time, have we wasted in bed! How much property we have as good as wasted upon ourselves, which might have been consecrated to the *Lord, or used for the comfort of his poor and needy ones!* O Saviour! let thy

[illegible]

his long-suffering towards us! But he has not only manifested forbearance, but LOVE,—tender, constant, everlasting love. And this morning, after all that is past, as believers in Jesus, he loves us with an infinite love. He rests in his love to us. He desires to be loved by us. He values our love. He is asking us, at the opening of this New Year, to love him. He speaks to us as children, and with paternal tenderness asks, “My son, give me thine heart.” How wonderful, how astonishing is this! The High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, asks for my heart,—my poor, depraved, polluted heart! O my God! take it, purify it, inhabit it, and use it for thine own glory and praise!

A New Year will bring new trials. Every future step will be to us an untrodden step. We know not what is before us in particular, but we know in general, that in the world we must have tribulation, for it is through much tribulation that we must enter into the kingdom of God. Our faith must be tried.

Will it hold fast the promise in the midst of the storm and tempest? Will it trust God in the dark and cloudy day? Will it give God credit when he seems to refuse to appear for us, or deliver us? Will it, when the hand of God appears to go out against us, or to be lifted up armed with a naked sword, as if to strike us, say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him?" God tries the faith of his people severely, even more thoroughly than gold is tried in the fire, that it "may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ." He will try our patience, our fortitude, our humility, our hope, our love; yea, every grace he has implanted within us. This year may be a trying year to us. Who can tell how many coffins may be brought into our dwellings—how many losses we may sustain—how many privations we may have to suffer—what temptations we may have to endure—what fiery darts Satan may hurl at us? We live in momentous times. **We** are surrounded by agencies and in-

struments of a powerful and alarming character. We need special grace, and what a mercy there is in Jesus special grace for special trials; and now, even to-day, at the opening of this New Year, the voice of mercy is calling to us, in tones of sweetness, with words of love, and is saying, "Come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may find sympathy, and obtain grace to help you in time of need." Blessed be God for a throne of grace, for grace given us in Jesus, and for the promise of grace to help us in every trying day!

A New Year will require new efforts to promote God's cause, and glorify the Saviour's name. We have done something: but, alas, how little! How much remains to be done! Never were calls louder, never was the field of labour larger than it is now. On every hand there are calls for help. God has given his people the means to do much, and he is calling them to use the means he has given. As far as instrumentality is concerned, all that is

wanting is, *the heart*. God has given us the Press; but are we prepared to use it, and to use it vigorously? Papists use it; Puseyites use it; Infidels use it; all creeds and classes use it. Will the Church of Christ use it—use it as she might—as she ought? Will individuals use it? Will we? We have missions,—missions for the villages, missions for towns and cities, and missions for heathen lands. Are we prepared to sustain them, to work them, to work them thoroughly? But what is principally needed is, INDIVIDUAL EFFORT. Our churches contain so many members who *do* scarce anything, who *give* little, who appear to *feel* less. They have never brought one soul to Jesus. They do not appear to realize that it is their duty to attempt it. Sinners perish all around them, but they do not seem to regard it. If they did, would they not speak to them? would they not pray for them? would they not strive to acquire influence, and use the influence they gain over them for their good? Half

the Church is asleep, and scarcely any of us are above half awake. Oh, that God would rouse us up! thoroughly rouse us up! Not in wrath, but in mercy; not by a thunder-storm, but by the sweet, gentle, yet powerful working of his own most blessed Spirit in our hearts. Brethren! let us not be satisfied to go on as we have done. Everything is progressing—everything is improving. Shall not we progress?—shall not we improve? We never had so little time to work as we have now. Every opportunity to give to God's cause, to speak for Jesus, to exert our influence upon sinners for their good, leaves one less. The grave is just before us. The great white throne will soon be placed for judgment; and remember, oh, remember, we are every one of us *to be rewarded according to our works!* Salvation is a free gift; it is always gratuitous; but being saved freely by grace, the measure of our reward will be in exact proportion to our works. The Judge knows and will remember the talents we possess, the op-

portunities that are granted us, the profession we have made, the duties we have omitted, and the course we have pursued. Look, I beseech you, at the poor Church, and work for her! Look at this miserable world, and labour for it! Look at the old serpent, the Devil, who deceiveth the whole world, and wrestle against him! Look, above all, look at the Lord Jesus,—at Jesus, who loved you, lived for you, suffered for you, died for you, pleads for you, and is coming to reward you; and labour for him! Labour in some proportion to the love he has shown you, the favours he has heaped upon you, and the glory he has promised you. Live for Christ, not for self. Labour for Christ, not for the meat that perisheth. Live by the faith of Christ, if you would be holy; live in the service of Christ, if you would be happy. Take no man for your pattern, but let Jesus be that. Take no human precept for your rule, but let the word of Jesus be that. Hear him :
' Let no man seek his own, but every man

another's welfare ;" "Do as I have done ;"
"Imitate those who, through faith and
patience, now inherit the promises."

The New Year will introduce us to new mercies. The Lord has laid up mercies for us, which he has not yet laid out upon us. Every new mercy lays us under new obligation. Mercies are loving cords to draw us closer to God, and bind us faster to the service of God. If he gives us health, we should employ our health for him. If he gives us wealth, we should spend our wealth for him. If we are allowed to speak, we should speak for him. If we are able to write, we should write for him. Upon every talent we possess, upon every mercy we receive, we should write "Holiness unto the Lord." The way to keep our mercies is to hold them as loans from God. The way to enjoy our mercies is to employ them in the service of God. What we spend for God we keep ; what we lay up for ourselves we lose. May every mercy we shall receive this year inflame our love, quicken our

zeal, deepen our humility and perfect our consecration to the Lord's service! Oh! to live, to breathe, to speak, to act for God, for God alone!

The New Year will afford us opportunities for gaining new victories. How many lusts we have which we have not conquered! How many passions that we have not subdued! How many habits which we have not overcome! Perhaps we have not brought the body into subjection to the soul, the appetites into subjection to reason, the whole person into subjection to Jesus. We have not overcome the world yet, so as to live above the love of its smiles, or the fear of its frowns. Satan is not yet under our feet. Up, then, and let us "put on the whole armour of God;" and trusting in promised strength, pleading for more grace, let us go forth with the great Captain of our salvation, conquering and to conquer! We must conquer, or be conquered. Which shall it be? We must subdue, or be subdued. Which will it be? We

can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth us; and his strength is made perfect in our weakness. Let us, then, set our hearts aright, fix our eyes aright, and make up our minds to be this year more thoroughly the Lord's, more active, devoted, and decided in his cause than we have ever been before. Let our motto be, "I MUST BE USEFUL." And, as we prize our Saviour's smile, or fear his frown, as we love the human family, as we regard God's glory, as we desire the prosperity of the Church, as we would look for and hasten the day of God, let us set our hearts upon being useful. Every morning through this year let us ask, What can I do for God and the good of souls to-day? And every evening let us inquire, What opportunity of usefulness have I lost? What talent have I hidden in the earth? Have I been living to myself to-day, or for Him who died for me and rose again? Brethren! the time is short, our obligations are many, our responsibility is solemn, and the work

is great. Let us, then, begin to-day, and every day do something with a view to save souls, and bring about a revival of pure and undefiled religion in our churches.

“ Remark, my soul, the narrow bounds
Of the revolving year ;
How swift the weeks complete their rounds,
How short the months appear !

“ So fast eternity comes on,
And that important day
When all that mortal life has done
God’s judgment shall survey.

“ Yet like an idle tale we pass
The swift advancing year ;
And study artful ways t’ increase
The speed of its career.

“ Waken, O God, my trifling heart,
Its great concern to see ;
That I may act the Christian part,
And give the year to thee.

“ So shall their course more grateful roll,
If future years arise ;
Or this shall bear my smiling soul
To joy that never dies.”





“THE DAY OF WRATH.”

ROMANS II. 5.

WRATH in man is violent, revengeful, often unjust; but the wrath of God is calm, holy, and perfectly righteous. Nothing awakens wrath in God but sin, and none are the objects of his wrath but obstinate offenders. His patience with such is wonderful. He is long suffering to usward. He bears with us just as long as justice will allow. He gives us space for repentance. He promises to receive and pardon every penitent transgressor. His mercy is sovereign, not so his wrath. He shews mercy simply because he will, but he punishes because justice requires it. He *must* be just, he *will* be merciful. Mercy lingers over our fallen world for six thousand years; wrath will have its day when mercy quits the throne. This is the day of salvation, when sinners may be saved freely, easily, and for ever. That

will be the day of vengeance, when s will be punished justly, fearfully, etc. Never was the day of wrath so n it is now, and never were sinners s to that tremendous period. Yet ho seriously think of it, how few an perly affected by it!

"The day of wrath,"—must I me Yes: so must you, reader! We escape meeting the period, but w escape the wrath. There is a hiding where wrath will not find us. Ther refuge where wrath cannot reach us. is a high tower where we shall be far out of the reach of it. That hiding that refuge, that high tower, is Je Jesus, as the great sacrifice for sin,— the accepted substitute, who obeyed t for sinners,—Jesus, who will be to a believe in him, what the ark was to when the flood buried the mountain hid the face of the earth, Jesus, v to the soul that flieth to him for s what the city of refuge, in the l Canaan, was to the manslayer. That

now calls us to him, invites us to his throne of grace, and promises to give to every one that accepts of his invitation, safety, peace and rest. If men did but believe that the day of wrath was coming, and that it was sure to overtake them, they would surely look out for a place of safety, they would listen to the Saviour's gracious invitation, nor rest until they found rest at his feet. But unbelief is so powerful in the heart of man by nature, it works so secretly, so insiduously, that it is not detected, even while it is so clearly displayed. We are all infidels by nature. We none of us believe God ; no, not even when we admit the Bible to be his book, indited by his Spirit, and written by his servants. But for unbelief, every sinner that reads of "the wrath to come," of "the day of vengeance of our God," of the "day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ," when "he shall render to every one according to his works," when "the wicked shall depart into everlasting fire. but the righteous

into life eternal," would tremble. Trembling he would ask, "What shall I do to be saved?" And, being directed to Jesus, would neither linger nor loiter until he had found "peace with God, through the blood of his cross." There is no shelter from "the wrath to come," but in Jesus; and no one will find shelter then, who does not flee for refuge to him now.

"The day of wrath,"—what provision are we making for it? It is said of some, that they "treasure up wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Treasure up wrath! Yes, they treasure up wrath! Every time that they reject the gospel anew, every time that they slight the Saviour's call afresh, every time they stifle the cries of an honest conscience, every time they strangle their convictions, they add to the degree of wrath that will be measured out to them by and bye. To prefer sin to holiness, to prefer self to Christ, to prefer the vanities of time to the glories of eternity, to prefer the world to God, is to

treasure up wrath against the day of wrath. And this is just what every unconverted sinner is doing. Millions are doing it at this very moment, and they are doing it every day. They are moral suicides. They destroy not their existence, but they cut themselves off from all hope of everlasting life. Oh, sinner, "thou hast destroyed thyself!" This is God's testimony, delivered in the most simple, pointed, and pathetic terms. "Destroyed thyself!" yes, and that while boasting of the full use of reason. "Destroyed thyself!" yes, and that notwithstanding the gospel and the ministers of Christ were continually crying to thee, "*Do thyself no harm.*" "Destroyed thyself!" yes, and that deliberately, not by some sudden stroke, in some sudden fit of passion, but by repeated strokes; in the sight of heaven, in prospect of hell, under the banner of hope, in sight of the refuge, while the sounds of mercy were ringing in thy ears. "Destroyed thyself!" What! and while thus boasting of the power of reason;

while warned, invited, and exhorted to the contrary ; so daringly, and so deliberately. Who, then, will pity thee ? Who will attempt to put in one word for thee, a bar of the Judge of all ? How canst thou pity thyself, or how excuse thyself ? Thou wouldst think thou wouldst be ashamed to lift up thy head, or look one of the angels in the face. But,

“ *The day of wrath* ” is not yet come. It is the day of mercy yet. Jesus sits on his throne to give repentance to the penitent, and the remission of sins to those who honestly and heartily confess before him. There is yet mercy with the Lord, that he may be feared, and plentiful redemption, that the slaves of sin may apply to him for deliverance. His merit is infinite, and his mercy as vast as his merit. He is now riding in his gospel chariot, and dispensing blessings to thousands ; go where this gospel is published,—he will pass by that way, and do as the poor blind beggar did, in the days of his flesh, cry out lustily and

portunately, “Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!” Believe his word, plead at his throne, seek until you obtain his Holy Spirit, and then, in prospect of “the day of wrath,” you will be able to sing with David, “Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble. thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.” Oh, that the ever blessed Spirit of God would accompany the reading of these lines with his blessing, and make them the power of God unto the reader’s salvation! Jesus is coming, and with him the day of wrath, and perdition of ungodly men; it *must* be here soon, it *may* be very soon; therefore, haste thee, and escape to the refuge before it is too late!





ALONE WITH GOD ON THE LORD'S DAY.

"I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

JOHN xvi. 32.

THE Lord Jesus had just been telling his disciples, that they would all forsake him, and leave him to himself. Not one of them would have courage to stand by him. Every one's heart would fail him. Even Peter, who felt so confident, and who said so fearlessly, "I will go with thee to prison and to death." Alas! no one knows his weakness until he is brought into trials. It is the engagement tries the soldier, the storm tries the mariner, and temptation tries the Christian. "Ye shall leave me alone," said Jesus; "and yet I am not alone; because the Father is with me." His Father had covenanted to be with him. He believed his Father's word, and expected to realize his Father's presence. Believer, thou hast the same privilege. The father of Jesus is thy father. He has given thee his word, say-

ing, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." So that in all places, at all times, you may say, "I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

Your family and friends may have left you for the house of God. There may be no one in the house but yourself. A solemn stillness reigns. All is quiet around you. There lies your open Bible inviting you to peruse its pages. There is the throne of grace where you are exhorted to meet with God. But you are perhaps thinking of former days, when you went to the house of God in company with beloved relatives and friends; where you enjoyed the ordinances of the gospel, and heartily praised the Lord. But now you are confined at home, a feeling of loneliness comes over you. Before you are aware you sigh, and are ready to say, "O, that it were with me as in times past." But suppress such feelings, silence such exclamations. It is your Father's will. He appointed that you should spend this Sabbath at home, rather than in his house. He has

withdrawn you from his people, but only to draw you nearer to himself is saying, "Come, spend the day with me. We are now alone, tell me all your thoughts, open all your mind, turn every desire into prayer." You are not alone, no Father is with you. Let your thoughts for a few minutes be taken up with this sweet subject, and consider,

First, *Who is with you.* "The Father, The Father of Jesus. The Omnipotent, the Omnipresent, the all-sufficient God who has said, 'The heavens are my throne, and the earth is my footstool; but to this man will I look, even to the lowly that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, who trembleth at my word.'" "For thou art the High and Lofty One that inhabitest eternity, whose name is Holy: I desire to dwell in the high and holy place, with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit; revive the spirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite." What wonderful condescension! What amazing grace is this! In your heart

dwelling, in your little room, the most high God comes to visit you, comes to commune with you, comes to bless you. *Your* Father is with you. He is not only the Father of Jesus, but your Father in Jesus. When about to ascend to heaven, your beloved Saviour said to his disciples, "I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God and your God. "Yes, he is your Father. He adopted you into his family by an act of sovereign grace. He took you from among the strangers, and put you among the children. He hath begotten you again to a lively hope. He hath sent his Holy Spirit into your hearts. He loves you with a father's love. He treats you as his child. He asks your confidence. He invites your fellowship. He courts familiarity. He says, "Wilt thou not from this time call me, my Father?" He directs, "When ye pray, say, Our Father." He exhorts, "Come boldly to a throne of grace." Remember then, *your Father is with you.*

Secondly, *When is he with you ? Always.*

Ever. "Lo, I am with you always." But he is more especially with his people at some seasons. In sorrow, in poverty, in sickness, in the hour of death, our Father is especially present with his people. But our Lord refers to solitary seasons. When friends are withdrawn, when human helpers fail, when earthly comforters are silenced, when stretched on the bed of sickness, or shut up from our friends through weakness or pain, when lawfully detained at home on Sabbath days, our Father is specially present with us. He is therefore present now—at this moment—in this place. Try and realize this fact: my heavenly Father is present with me. As really present with me while thus alone, as with the saints in the sanctuary, or with saints before his throne. God is with me. God in all the glory of his nature—God in all the riches of his grace—God in all the tenderness of his paternal heart—God is with me, and with me to bless me.

Thirdly, *For what is he with you?* For


what For whatever you need; for whatever you can consistently desire. He is with you to converse with you. Not audibly, but really, though silently. He is at liberty to listen to you. He will have patience to bear with you. "Pour out your heart before him." Confess every sin in his ear. Expose every corruption to his eye. Lay the heart bare in his presence. Set your iniquities before him, your secret sins in the light of his countenance. Tell him your trials, temptations and troubles. Speak to him of your doubts and fears, your forebodings and misgivings. Tell him all that Satan tells you, all that the world does to you, and all the thoughts that work within you. Let there be no reserve. Keep nothing back. He is your Father, he knows all, but he wishes to hear it all from your own lips. He says, "Let me hear thy voice." Bring forward all your petitions, urge all your requests, and especially plead his own promises. They were given you for this purpose, and when thus pleaded,

will be fulfilled in your experience. Make free with God while you are thus alone with him. It is a golden opportunity, improve it. It is a precious season, make the most of it. Let not your weakness, or coldness, or deadness, or worldliness, deter you, but turn all such feelings into prayer. Tell the Lord just how you feel. Ask him for grace to remedy the evils of which you complain. One word from his gracious lips will soften the hard heart, thaw the frozen heart, enlighten the dark heart, and spiritualize the worldly heart. Let nothing keep you back, or make you distant, but "*draw nigh unto God.*" Forget not that he is your Father; and with whom can you make free, if not with your Father? With whom should you feel at home if not with your Father?

Is it so, that the Father is with you? Then you ought not to repine or complain. Suppose others leave you, what then, if your Father stays at home with you? What if you cannot go to the Lord's house, if the Lord of the house comes to you?

If you have not the candle, you have the sun. If you have not the cistern, you have the fountain. If you have not the servant, you have his Lord. Not only so, but you would have both, if both would be best for you. For you ought to conclude, that whatever the Lord withholds is not necessary; whatever he refuses, would not be for your good. You have his word, that "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." Is it so, that the Father is with you? Then you ought not to fear or despond. Why should you? What have you to fear? If the Lord of hosts is with you, if the God of Jacob is your refuge, should you not say, "therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Fear, whom? Fear, what? Your Father who is with you, says, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteous-

ness." Despond! why should you despond? How can you think of desponding, when you have the promises on your side, the fulness of Christ for your supply, and your Father is present with you? Is it so, that the Father is with you, then you ought not to yield to the flesh, or to sin. Never does the flesh work more powerfully than when we are alone, or experiencing any privation. Then it rises against God, mutters rebellion against the Most High, arraigns the conduct of the Lord, and sits in judgment on the Supreme. It "lusteth against the Spirit." It is to be mortified, not indulged. It is to be crucified, not encouraged. "The spirit that is in us lusteth to envy." It envies the wealthy, if we are poor; the strong, if we are weak; the healthy, if we are sick; the man that hath many friends, if we are left alone: and those who can attend the ordinances of God's house, if we are shut up and cannot come forth. But all this is wrong. In respect to these *things* we are where we ought to be, and



what we should be, because God has appointed that we should be *as* we are, and *where* we are. Is it so, that the Father is with us, then we should not be idle, or misemploy our talents. In the sick room, in the solitary chamber, we may sympathize with God, and do something for God; if our heart is set upon it. The talent, whatever it may be, however small, must not be wrapped up in a napkin, no, not when laid aside from our more public situation. There is always something to do or bear, in doing or bearing which, we may glorify our Father who is in heaven.

Observe then, God has promised to be with all his people. Therefore, he is with you. He has promised to be always and everywhere with them, therefore he is present with you now under your present circumstances. This being the case you ought to feel safe and satisfied; safe, for Omnipotence is your protector; satisfied, for the all-sufficient God is with you to supply you. Never forget, one source of comfort always remains, wherever you

may be, however you may be distressed, you "are not alone, for Father is with you." Others may forsake you, he never will. Others may fail, but he abideth faithful. The Father is with all his children, therefore they will persevere, and finally be more than conquerors. For if God be for us, who can be against us? If God be with us, what matter though men do leave us. God is with us, and will be with us even unto the end. But he is for us, he will beat down our foes before our eyes, and spoil them that hate us. Our Father is with us in our most solitary hours, in the most secluded spots; he is with us rejoicing over us to do us good; he is with us to guide us with his counsel, and to reward us to glory. Blessed be my Father who is with me; glorious be his name, which the world can neither give nor take away! Inestimable blessing, the value of which no finite mind can calculate! This is the honour that cometh from God only. This is a favour com-

only on the children of his love. This is a blessing which ought to fill the heart with gratitude, and the lips with praise. To God, only wise ; to God, ever gracious ; to God, who humbleth himself to be present with his poor, tried, troubled, afflicted, and isolated people ; to God, our covenant God in Jesus ; be glory and honour, dominion and power, thanksgiving and praise, both now and for ever, Amen.

“Sprinkled with reconciling blood,
I dare approach thy throne, O God ;
Thy face no frowning aspect wears,
Thy hand no vengeful thunder bears !

“Th’ encircling rainbow, peaceful sign !
Doth with refulgent brightness shine !
And while my faith beholds it near,
I bid farewell to every fear.

“Let me my grateful homage pay ;
With courage sing, with fervour pray ;
And, though myself a wretch undone,
Hope for acceptance through thy Son—

“Thy Son, who on the accursed tree
Expired to set the vilest free ;
On this I build my only claim,
And all I ask is in his name.”



CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIAN.

THE true Christian is under the greatest obligation to Christ. Indeed he is nothing without Christ, for Jesus is his all. He realizes his obligation, and it inspires him with gratitude; he acknowledges his obligation, and it clothes him with humility. All he is, he is by virtue of union to Christ; all he has, he receives from Christ; and all he expects, is founded on his connection with Christ.

Is he justified? It is by the righteousness of Christ. He has no merit of his own—his best obedience is like filthy rags. He cannot keep the law, and yet he cannot be justified except the claims of the law be met. Jesus therefore met them. He obeyed the law for him. He makes over his righteousness unto him, and it is placed to his account. It is on this ground that he is justified. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Is he renewed and sanctified? It is by the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit was procured by Christ, was bestowed upon Christ, and was then sent to call him as a poor sinner to Christ. The first good thought, the first rising of a good desire, and all the after manifestations of a new nature are from the Spirit of Christ. Without the Spirit of Christ he is carnal, depraved, and dead. As destitute of spiritual life, as the putrid corpse is of natural life. But the Spirit of Jesus quickens him, enlightens him, leads him into truth, helps him in prayer, and makes him a new creature.

Is he guided aright through this wilderness world? It is by the wisdom of Christ. He has no wisdom of his own, and he is surrounded by snares and foes. He has within him a principle of evil, which invariably prompts him to leave the right road. He is prone to start aside like a broken bow. He is attracted and affected by external objects, which feed the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye,

and the pride of life; and but for divine wisdom would stray into the fatal paths of folly and crime. To guide him aright requires an omniscient eye, a wise intellect, and loving heart; and Jesus possesses and exercises these for the good of his people.

Is he protected from the innumerable dangers and foes to which he is exposed? It is by the power of Christ. That power is his guard, and his defence. As an almighty arm it is placed beneath him, and is lifted up to defend him. He looks to it when foes assail him; he leans on it when his own strength fails him; and he trusts in it, in every hour of danger. Without the power of Jesus, he never could persevere; with it, he can never apostatize. It keeps him as a garrison keeps a town, as a shepherd keeps his flock, as a parent does his child.

Is he influenced to obey the divine precepts? It is by the authority of Christ. His Saviour is his Lord. His Redeemer is his King. He obeys because Jesus bids.

The love of Christ to him has produced love within him ; and love is always ready and pleased to obey the beloved one. Love has more power over the heart than mere authority. But where love and authority meet in the same person, as in Jesus, the power is invincible. We obey him, because we love him ; and we love him, because he first loved us.

Is he supplied ? Are his wants anticipated and met ? It is by the providence of Christ. Jesus fills all space. He rules over all worlds,—he directs and controls all events,—he keeps his eye and his heart upon his people,—he is engaged to provide for them,—and he sacredly keeps his engagement. He feeds and clothes the body,—he feeds and clothes the soul,—he is observant of all our wants, attentive to our cries, and ready to supply our needs. Without him we may languish, starve and die ; but with him for our provider, we are strengthened, supplied, and supported.

Are they consecrated ? It is to serve

the cause, and promote the glory of
The consecrating Spirit, being the
of Christ, sets them apart for him,
them to him, and fires them with
glorify him. They henceforth live
unto themselves, but unto him with
for them and rose again. Their duty
to glorify him in their bodies, souls
spirits, which are his. That they
fail, grieves them. His readiness
don their failings, quickens their
him, and increases their desire to
him; and they often long for heaven
cause they believe that there they
uninterruptedly praise, bless, and
his most holy name.

O Jesus! what should we be
thee? Poor condemned criminals,
prayed and polluted wretches, lost
wandering sheep, conquered and
slaves, wild and lawless rebels, in
and starving paupers, unsanctified
tified, and unblest. But with time
are rescued from Satan, raised from
gradation, accepted of God, pro

n perdition, and made kings and priests
o God. Reader, what connexion is
re between you and Christ? Is there
? or, are you without Christ? If you
a stranger to vital union with Christ,
are a stranger to true religion, to
d happiness, to lasting peace, and to a
l founded hope of heaven. To be
hout Christ, is to be yet in your sins,
be under condemnation, to be exposed
the just wrath of Almighty God, the
e of your lusts, and the captive of
an. O seek then an interest in Christ.
k union to Christ, nor rest until it is
ained and enjoyed. Obtaining and
oying it, seek to honour him.

“I would for ever speak his name,
In sounds to mortal ears unknown;
With angels join to praise the Lamb,
And worship at his Father’s throne.”





THE DAY OF SALVATION.


Who does not wish to be saved? Why, who is not sometimes afraid of being lost? Who has not heard of a day of salvation? And who has not, more or less, neglected it? If we would be saved, it must be in God's way; and if we would be saved, it must be in God's time. That God's time is the best time is generally admitted; but when is God's time? Does he wish you to go on in sin a few years longer? Does he wish you to insult him by the enmity of your heart, and the ungodliness of your life, for some time yet to come? Is he a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, and does he, therefore, say, that he will not save you until you have committed so much more sin? "No," you say, "no, certainly, that cannot be the case." Then why do you fix God's time at some indefinite period in the future, instead of reading his own word to see if that will

give you any information on the point? "But does the Bible say anything about God's time, when he is willing to save sinners—to save me?" It does, and its testimony is so plain that you cannot misunderstand it, except you do so wilfully. Hear it, "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). "According to this, God's time is the present time." Exactly so. "*To-day*, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;" for "Behold this is the day of salvation."

A Saviour is provided. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. He obeyed the law for sinners. He suffered the desert of sin for sinners. He conquered Satan for sinners. He took away the sting of death for sinners. He opened the gates of heaven for sinners. Whatever he did, he did for sinners. Whatever he suffered, he suffered for sinners. Whatever he procured, he procured for sinners. His invitations are addressed to sinners. His expostulations are directed

to sinners. His promises are made to sinners. And if you are a sinner, why not to you? No one has a right to say, Jesus *cannot* save me. No one has a right to say, Jesus *will not* save me.

Salvation is proclaimed. Jesus is not only able and willing to save; but he is ready, he is waiting, to save all that come unto God by him. God commands us to publish salvation in every land, in every language, for all classes of sinners. The representation is, that a fleet has arrived in the river laden with all good things, that the market is opened on the shore, that it is stocked with every variety of good things, and the crier is sent forth to go into all the streets and lanes of the city, and cry with a loud voice, in the plainest language, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." Here all the blessings of salvation, represented by wine and milk, are offered gratuitously. They may be had



by the poorest. The terms are, "no money, no price." Can anything be freer? Can anything be more generous? Can any proclamation be plainer? Man is in want, and God has made provision for his wants; man is poor, and God sends to him to come for a supply though he has no money, telling him that he has set no price upon his provisions. Salvation is a free gift. Nothing can be freer. The fountain that cleanseth us is open and free. The righteousness that justifies us is freely bestowed. The Spirit that sanctifies us is given to every one that asketh. God will never barter with a sinner, but he is willing to save him by grace through faith, and to give him even the faith itself.

Salvation is presented to us. It is a healing medicine, to restore us to health. It is a beautiful robe, to cover and adorn us. It is a rock and a refuge, to shelter and secure us. It is the choicest provision, to refresh and feed us. It is living water, to satisfy and cleanse us. It is a friend to deliver, to conduct, to preserve,

and confer all possible blessings upon us.

Salvation is pressed upon our attention. By the solemn warnings,—by the awful threatenings,—by the kind invitations,—by the gentle admonitions,—by the striking examples,—by the serious exhortations,—and by the plainest proclamations of the holy word, God presses the subject upon our attention. But, alas, many of us are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, that refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Therefore, the apostle puts the solemn question, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” Therefore, he gives the solemn caution, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, *but also* heaven.” And again, “Beware,

therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which you will in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you."

Reader, you need salvation. It is provided in Jesus. It is presented in the everlasting gospel. It may be received by faith. You will either receive or reject it. I know not which, but hear the conclusion of the whole matter, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned."

- "Ho! every one that thirsts, draw nigh,
'Tis God invites the fallen race;
Mercy and free salvation buy;
Buy wine and milk, and gospel grace.
Come, to the living waters come;
Sinners, obey your Maker's voice;
Return ye weary wand'ers home,
And in redeeming love rejoice!





A NEW START.

LET us *look back* on the past, and ask what have I done? What have I done to improve the church—to benefit the world—to honour Jesus—to dethrone Satan—to bring sinners to repentance? Can we look at what we have done without shame? without crying aloud for pardon? But what have we left undone? What says the closet, the Bible, the house of prayer, our own consciences? How much time we have squandered! How many opportunities of doing good we have lost! How much money we have wasted! How much more time might have been spent in prayer! How many more tracts we might have circulated! How many more direct efforts to bring sinners to Jesus we might have made! How much money squandered upon ourselves might have been spent for the Lord! The past is gone, and *for ever*. We never can buy back

time we have wasted, the opportunities we have lost. But we have the present—we may have a portion of the future—then let us start afresh, and start afresh this day.

Let us *look around*, and ask, What is there to do? *To do!* What is there not to do? There are drunkards to reclaim, Sabbath-breakers to admonish, and backsliders to restore. There are children to teach, places of worship to fill, tracts to distribute, and sinners to save. *To do!* Ask not what is there to do, but what am I *able* to do? what am I *willing* to do? There is work enough for all, work suitable to every one. All that is wanting is clear heads, warm hearts, and willing hands. A people that have a mind to work, to work for God, to work right heartily, to go to work immediately, and never quit their labour until the Master calls them home. Brother, what are you doing for Christ? Sister, what are you doing to bring souls to Jesus? What *can* you do that you have not? what *will*

you do? This *may* be your last year. It *will* be the last year to thousands. "The night cometh when no man can work." Jesus cometh, and he will *reward every one of us according to our works*. How much there is to do, and how few appear willing to do it! Self is consulted, carnal customs are followed, ease is sought, the flesh is gratified; and while this is the case, souls perish, God is dishonoured, Jesus is disobeyed, and Satan triumphs.

Let us *look* up, and ask our good and gracious God to pardon the past, and give us grace for the future. Grace will conquer nature. It will enable us to rise above self, to crucify the flesh, to put off the old man, to overcome the love of ease, to master every bad habit, and go to work heartily, and at once, for God and souls. What nature cannot do, grace can. What we are afraid to attempt with the grace we have, will be accomplished with ease by the grace we may obtain. We have *not*, because we ask not, or because we

ask amiss. Let our *motive* be love to Christ and immortal souls ; let our *rule* be the written word ; let our *object* be the glory of God in the salvation of men, and the Lord will give us more grace, and crown us with his blessing. We can only work comfortably and acceptably for God with what we receive from God, let us therefore seek grace whereby we may serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

Let us *look forward* and ask, what shall I do ? How shall I walk ? How shall I work ? How shall I wish I had walked and worked when Jesus comes, or when death calls me home ? Beloved, we must die, and we must die soon. We must give an account of ourselves to God, an account of the use to which we have put the talents he has given us, the time he allotted us below. The eye of our Master is upon us. At this moment he is observing what impressions these thoughts make upon us. He watches to see if we repent of the past—if we look up to seek grace

for the future—if we determine in his strength to make a new start—or if we lay aside this paper, forget what manner of persons we are, and go on in our old course. God expects fruit. He looks for results. He calls us to action—immediate action—bold energetic action. Shall he look in vain? Shall this year be allowed to glide away like the past? Shall we consult our own ease, our worldly reputation, our carnal pleasures, our sensual gratification in preference to his glory. Did we bring any souls to Christ last year? Shall we bring any to him this year? Can we be satisfied without it? Can we live, and not travail in birth for souls? Can we live a day, and not make some effort to snatch sinners from the flames? Is hell a reality? Are impenitent sinners all around us going there? Is it possible to stop them? Can Jesus save them? Is it probable that God will bless the tract prayerfully given, or the kind word spoken to *them*? It is; and ~~can~~ we be so cruel so unkind, as to let

them go to hell without warning, and as of old, "perish for ever, without any regarding it?" Brothers, sisters in Jesus, awake! arise! Let us, one and all, think, purpose, pray, determine, solemnly, seriously, deliberately, instantly, *to make a new start this day.*

Sinner! unconverted sinner, I beseech you to pause in your career, stop in your course! The way in which you are leads to hell. It is the direct road. If you persevere you may be in hell before the year ends. Hark! Jesus calls you, He says, "Come unto me." He promises, "I will give you rest." Go, then, to Jesus, go at once. On your knees confess your sins before him, plead with him to save you, and save you *at once.* Ask for the Holy Spirit to sanctify you, to make you a new creature. Pray in right earnest. Pray until you realize that your sins *are* pardoned, that you *have* peace with God, that you are saved with an everlasting salvation. Nothing is so dreadful as sin, therefore get it pardoned. Eternity is

most solemn, therefore seek preparation for it, and so make *a new start this day*. If you do, you will never regret it; if you do not, through eternity you may repent of it. Now, the way to heaven is plain, the gate of life is open. Now, the invitation is held out, the promise of pardon, peace, and salvation stands good. Now, you may escape from threatened wrath, and receive all promised blessings. Tomorrow the door of mercy may be closed, the way of escape may be shut up. Tomorrow, Satan may have your feet in his snares, and may blind your eyes to danger, and bind you fast with the cords of your sins. If, therefore, you have any fear of hell, if you have any desire for heaven, if you have any wish to be really and permanently happy; fall upon your knees, flee to the Saviour, seek right heartily for mercy, and so make *a new start to day*.





THE SOLDIER'S ENQUIRY.

"The soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do?"—LUKE iii. 14.

THE application was made by certain baptized soldiers to John the Baptizer, who went before the face of the Lord Jesus to prepare his way. John preached up sorrow for sin, faith in the Lamb of God, and holiness of life. Those who professed to receive his doctrine were baptized by him, and were called his disciples. Among others who came to him were some soldiers, they professed repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus, and on this profession they were baptized: and now, seeing John was giving particular directions to the people respecting their conduct, these soldiers come to him, and say, "*And what shall we do?*" This was just as it should be, they wished to learn their duty that they might do it. All right-hearted professors do just as these soldiers did, because they feel just

as these soldiers felt. Well, John tells them in a few words what was required of them. They were to do justly and love mercy, "Do violence to no man." They were to exercise charity and speak the truth, "Neither accuse any falsely." They were to be satisfied with their temporal supplies, "Be content with your wages." Here then is the sum of a religious soldier's duty. But all soldiers are not religious, nay the great majority of them have no real religion at all, therefore if any soldier should make the same enquiry of us, we must endeavour to ascertain what is his character, before we can give a just and proper answer. Let us suppose then,

First, that a soldier who has been thoughtless, careless, and altogether indifferent about religion until the present time, puts the question, and says, "*What shall I do?*" We answer, if you have not a Bible, get one immediately, read the New Testament carefully, every now and then lifting up the heart to God, and


crying, "Lord, teach me to understand thy holy and ever blessed word, open it to my mind by thy Holy Spirit, and dispose my heart to receive its sacred truths." Go and hear the gospel where it is faithfully and pointedly preached. Often go into some retired place to pray, that God would create in you a clean heart, and give you faith in his beloved Son. If you know any religious soldier, go to him and speak with him about your soul, and the way in which a poor sinner can be saved from the wrath to come. Look at the Lord Jesus as a Saviour, one who saves sinners, all sorts of sinners, and saves them freely, fully, and for ever. Go to him, because he invites you. Ask him to save you, because he came into the world to save. Place your confidence in him,—in his word which reveals him, in his blood which cleanses from all sin, in his righteousness which justifies from all things; or in his perfect work, which saves every sinner who trusts in it, and in it alone. Avoid every temptation to drink, to trifle

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with religion, or commit any sin, and ask the Lord to give you *that* grace which will make you sorrow for sin, set your heart against sin, and deliver you from all the consequences of sin. Salvation is of the Lord. He saves sinners. He saves soldiers. He will save you. Therefore, in one word, our reply to your question is, seek to be saved by the Lord Jesus with an everlasting salvation, and seek until you can say with a glad and rejoicing heart, "Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jesus is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation, or my Saviour."


Second, that a soldier who has become thoughtful, concerned, and desirous of enjoying real religion, but is exercised with doubts, fears and suspicions, puts the question, "*What shall I do?*" You want to find peace, to enjoy pardon, to realize reconciliation with God, and be happy in the Lord's love. Well, you *may* enjoy all *this*. But in order to it, you must learn

to renounce yourself entirely. You must see that in you, that is in your flesh, there dwelleth no good thing,—that you can do nothing to atone for your sins, that you can give nothing to God for your pardon,—that if your salvation depended on one good thought to be produced by yourself, salvation would to you be an impossibility,—that if ever you are saved, it must be by free, sovereign, and distinguishing grace,—or, that salvation must be conferred upon you as *a favour*, or you can never be saved. When this is the case happiness is near, deliverance is at the door. But it often takes much discipline, many trials, and various painful exercises to bring us to this. Nevertheless, we must come to it. We must *feel* that we are helpless. We must *see* that we are totally depraved. Then we must *look* out of ourselves, and away from ourselves to Jesus Christ alone. There is no other way to obtain peace with God. You may try what you please, but all will fail you. You must look to Jesus, as the



serpent-bitten Israelite looked to the brazen serpent placed on the pole in the midst of the camp by Moses. You must look to Jesus, as the sick man looks to his physician. You must look to Jesus, as the insolvent debtor looks to his surety. The moment you can look away from every thing within you, and every thing without you, and look to Jesus *alone*, that moment you will find peace, but never before. I have known persons go on for years in doubts, darkness, gloom, and distress, trying all the means they could think of, or others could suggest to them, but no peace was ever enjoyed, until at last from sheer necessity, they were obliged to look simply to Jesus, to venture entirely upon him, to let him be their Saviour, providing the blood that atoned for their sins, the righteousness that justified their persons, the Spirit that sanctified their natures—or, in a word, to do all for them and all within them. My dear fellow soldier, if you are willing to be saved by Jesus, he is willing to save you. But he will not help you to

save yourself. If he wear the name of a Saviour, he will do the work. He will take you *just as you are*, and he will by his word, providence, grace, and Spirit, render you *just what you should be*. Therefore yield yourself unto him. Commit your soul into his hands. Give your whole person away to him. Let him be your Saviour. There is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption *for you in him*, but nowhere else. You may be made *complete in him*, but nowhere else. Once more, therefore, we repeat the all important testimony, **YOU MUST LOOK TO JESUS, AND TO JESUS ONLY**, if ever you would have peace with God, purity of heart, a title to heaven, strength to resist temptation, or ability to do the will of God. It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; every spiritual blessing, every holy comfort, every divine gift, is in him, and in him for the poor, empty, weak, worthless, lost, ruined, and wretched sons of men. He says to you at *this moment*, as your eye



traces the words on this paper, "*Look unto me and be ye saved.*" "*Come unto me, and I will give you rest.*" "*I will in no wise cast you out.*" "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. x. 13. Soldiers, behold we "set before you the way of life, and the way of death, therefore choose life that ye may live;" live for ever, live in glory, live as Jesus lives, where God eternally resides. Come, then, to Jesus, and all will be well.

"Come, it is his invitation ;
Come to me, the Saviour says ;
Why, O why, such hesitation,
Gloomy doubts and base delays ?

Thus invited to his favour,
Will you pause and not draw nigh ?
This would be to charge your Saviour
With deceit and cruelty.

Do you fear your own unfitness,
Burden'd as you are with sin ?
'Tis the Holy Spirit's witness ;
Christ invites you ;—enter in."



DON'T FORGET.


A SHORT time ago I saw two persons in close conversation, and when they parted the one called out after the other "DON'T FORGET." What had been the subject of their conversation I know not. They might have entered into some engagement of importance, or one of them might have made a promise ; however, there was some doubt respecting the fidelity of the memory. The engagement, if there was one, might be broken ; or the promise might not be fulfilled. We are all prone to forget, and things of importance are often forgotten first. Reader, there are six things which you ought never to forget ; let me remind you of them.

"Don't forget" that you are immortal. You must live for ever. Your circumstances may change, but your soul will never cease to exist. The body grows old and decays ; not so the soul. "I must

live for ever." What a solemn thought! "I can never die, or cease to exist." What an affecting fact! But where shall I live? What shall I be? What serious questions are these! Ought we not to ponder them well? Should they not frequently occupy our thoughts?

"Don't forget" that you are a sinner. You have broken God's law. You deserve God's wrath. You are by nature under God's curse. A sinner is a rebel against God's government. In league with God's foe. A despiser of God's word. A sinner, if dealt with justly, must be punished, and punished for ever. *"Don't forget" that you deserve punishment.* That if God only gives you what you deserve, he will banish you from his presence, cast you into hell, and shut you up with the devil and his angels for ever. What a shocking thought. What a dreadful doom. What an affecting idea, that if God gives me my right, my desert, hell is my portion for ever.

"Don't forget" that you are accountable.



God holds you accountable for your conduct, for your thoughts, for your words. You must give an account to God why you have indulged hard thoughts of him, why you have spoken against him, why you have broken his just and holy commands. Yea, you must account for not loving him with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength, every moment of your life. You must also render an account why you have not loved every human being as yourself. Or why you have not been holy, just, and good. "Don't forget" that God holds you accountable for all you do, say, think, or feel, every moment of your life; and that you cannot shift off your responsibility if you would. If your account should be called for before it is ready; if you should be suddenly arrested by death, before you are prepared to account for your conduct, what will be the result?

"Don't forget" that you are cared for. You cannot with justice say, "No man careth for my soul." Many care for you.

It is because we care for you that we write thus to you, print for you, and put our printed thoughts into your hand. We care for you, and therefore we pray for you; but do you ever pray for yourselves? We care for you, and therefore we would willingly do anything that is likely to prevent you suffering the bitter pains of eternal death; but do you thus care for yourself? "Don't forget" that many care for you, and desire your everlasting salvation. Oh, that you cared for yourself!

"Don't forget" that you are in danger. Your life hangs by a thread. While you are without Christ, you hang by that thread over the pit of hell. If that thread snaps, you are lost for ever. Your danger is great. It is imminent. No tongue can describe it. No figure can adequately represent it. You do not seem aware of it. An unpardoned sinner may be arrested by the officers of divine justice at any time. Safe you are not, you cannot be. Out of Noah's ark there was no safety from the waters of the deluge; out

of Christ there is no safety from the fire of Divine wrath. Out of the city of refuge there was no safety for the manslayer from the avenger of blood; out of Christ there is no safety for any sinner, from the executioners of the sentence of Divine justice. Danger! Sinner, you are always and everywhere in danger. At any moment you may be cut down, and consigned to black despair, "Don't forget," then, that you are in danger, in danger of dying in your sins, and of being punished for your sins by the justice of God for ever.

"Don't forget" that you may be saved. There is no necessity for you to go to hell, unless you create that necessity yourself, by living in sin, and rejecting the Saviour. Why may not you be saved? Why! Who says you may not be saved? Who has a right to say so? Who? If you are not saved it will not be because there is no Saviour, for "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." It will not be because there is not efficacy in his blood, for it "cleanseth from all sin."

It will not be because he refuses to receive and save you for he has said, "I will in no wise cast you out" It will not be because is unwilling that you should be saved, for "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" and he has sent his ministers to you as "ambassadors for Christ: as though *God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*" There is a way of salvation, but will you walk in it? There is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, but will you wash in it and be clean? There is a righteousness presented to you that will justify you from all things, but will you receive it, put it on, and wear it? In a word there is salvation in Jesus for all who need it, desire it, seek it, and are willing to be saved by it. "Don't forget," then, that you are immortal, that you are sinful, that you are accountable, that you are cared for, that you are in danger, but *that you may be saved.* "Don't forget"

that if you go to hell it is for your own sin, it is because you prefer going there to going to heaven by the Lord Jesus Christ; but if you go to heaven it is by free grace, it is through the Lord Jesus Christ, it is to the honour and praise of God. "Don't forget" that you must be saved or lost, and that a very little time will decide which, and that the decision will be final, eternal; a cause of everlasting rejoicing, or a source of endless, hopeless, awful, regret.

"Sinners, behold the Lamb of God
Who takes away our guilt;
Look to the precious, precious blood,
That Jews and Gentiles spilt.

"He came to take the sinner's place,
And shed his precious blood,
Let Adam's guilty, ruin'd race,
Behold the Lamb of God.

"Sinners to Jesus now draw near,
Invited by his word:
The chief of sinners need not fear,
Behold the Lamb of God."



AFFLICTIONS NECESSARY.

"He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."—**LAM.** III. 33.

JEREMIAH was deeply tried. He lived in the very midst of sin and suffering. Almost every day his heart bled. As a patriot, he loved his country, but he saw it desolated. As a man, he loved his fellowmen, but he saw them slain by the sword, and led into captivity. As a Jew, he loved the temple, but he saw it destroyed by fire. As a believer, he loved his God, and he saw him daily dishonoured and blasphemed. So great were his sufferings, that he cursed the day of his birth, and looked upon God as his enemy. His book of Lamentations was sprinkled with his tears, and may very appropriately have been written with blood. How happy are our circumstances compared with his! How highly we are privileged compared with him! Yet we sometimes complain, and are occasionally tempted to

murmur. This is decidedly wrong. It is very sinful. Nothing can justify it, for "he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

First, here is a fact well known,—the Lord does afflict—he grieves the children of men. Trouble never springs out of the dust, nor do afflictions come by chance. "Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The reference is to physical sufferings, and not to moral evil, and therefore we fearlessly answer, No. Every trial and affliction is sent from our Father's throne, and its direction is written by our Father's hand. He appoints the kind, the degree, and the direction of our afflictions. He afflicts us sometimes in the body by weakness or severe pain, by acute diseases or chronic disorders. Some are never free from pain. Some are so weak that life is almost a burden. Some suffer violently for a time. Others find it less in degree, but longer in duration. The fever, the asthma, the consumption, come not except the Lord

send them. Some are long exempt, others are early smitten. But each is under the divine direction, and according to divine appointment. He afflicts us at other times in the mind—here one loses the use of reason, there another is covered with the cloud of depression. One has bitter convictions, another has gloomy fears. One is mourning under the hiding of the Lord's countenance, and another can find no evidences of eternal life. The sorrows of the mind are various, and the immediate causes of them as various. Many appear to have good health, but little comfort; others have ill health, but much inward and spiritual comfort. Some are afflicted in the family; unsuitable tempers are joined together, or children are desired but withheld, or if given are sickly and early taken away. Here poverty pinches, and there plenty is unattended with a blessing. We are afflicted with disappointments, losses, crosses, rivals, and by our labour being apparently in vain. None are exempt. None can always escape, for

“the Lord trieth the righteous.” “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”


Second, here is a fact not generally believed,—“He doth not afflict willingly.” He speaks after the manner of men. It is not against his will, but not without a cause,—He does not afflict from mere temper as man sometimes does. Earthly fathers correct their children often “after their own pleasure.” Not so our heavenly Father; he does it “for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.” He doth not afflict us from his heart, or in mere sovereignty. If he would do us good, or confer blessings upon us, he looks into himself for the motive; but if he afflicts us, he always finds the cause in us. He only grieves us from *necessity*. He has fixed his end, which is to make us holy, to conform us to the image of his Son; from this he will not be diverted, but he will accomplish it. In the afflictions he sends, he aims at our deeper sanctification, or our greater usefulness,

or simply at his own glory, which is always linked with our good. He therefore afflicts or grieves us to exercise our graces; these would otherwise often lie dormant, become weak, fade and wither. To wean us from the world, to which we are too much attached, and should be more so, if it were not for trials, disappointments, and vexations. To embitter sin, which is the prolific root on which every pain, grief, and sorrow grows. To endear the Saviour, who is our solace in sorrow, and will be our glorious deliverer from it. Never does Jesus appear so precious as in the hours of trouble and trial. To prevent our falling into temptation, which we should more frequently than we do, if we were not kept awake and watchful by our various sorrows. To fit us for usefulness, for as the land must be ploughed, harrowed, and crushed, if it is to be fruitful and supply our wants; so must we be tempted, tried, and troubled, if we are to be of much use to man, or to bring much glory to God. To make us long for heaven,

which we seldom do when all is pleasant, bright, and sunny below. If therefore our heavenly Father in sending afflictions and causing us grief, aims at our deeper sanctification; if he intends to exercise our graces, to wean us from the world, to embitter sin, to endear the Saviour, to prevent our falling into temptation, to fit us for usefulness, and to make us long for heaven; it cannot be said that he does it for the sake of afflicting us, or in his sovereignty, or willingly, but it must be acknowledged that it is from necessity. If he loves us with an infinite love,—if he has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of his Son,—if he will make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,—and if he will correct our faults and our follies,—he must afflict us.

He grieves us that we may not grieve him, or because we have done so. He afflicts us because he loves us, and intends to illustrate his love in us. We may trace our afflictions and griefs to any thing but

the pleasure or mere sovereignty of God ; but we may not trace them there, for it is not their source. Let us therefore receive correction patiently, bow beneath the yoke which he lays upon us meekly, and amidst all our griefs and woes look at his promises, and through his promises into his own loving heart. He intends to bring us nearer to himself To teach us the value of our spiritual privileges. To lead us out of self, and to render Jesus more and more glorious in our eyes. In our deepest trials we have still many mercies. In our sorest troubles we have still cause for joy. Let us therefore listen to the afflicted prophet when he says, "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sin ?" And with another let us say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me ; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." Impatience will only add to the



weight of the cross, and complaining will call for heavier strokes ; we shall, therefore, if we are wise, look up to the Lord for more grace, and pray that the promised strength of Jesus may be made perfect in our weakness. If the Lord can only get himself glory by our sufferings, that should satisfy us ; and that he may get glory by them should be our principal aim. It is much better and more christian-like to seek that the Lord should be glorified by our afflictions, than that we should be speedily delivered from them. Happy is the man who is willing to bear any cross, to endure any trial, or suffer any privation, that God may be glorified in him, and the power and grandeur of real religion may be illustrated by him. May I ever live *for* the Lord, not for myself. May I ever seek God's glory before my own ease, comfort, health, wealth, or honour. May self be annihilated in me, and may I be enabled to say with blessed Paul, in the prospect of all the changes of this mortal life, this is " my earnest expect-

tation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Blessed Lord, help me to believe in every season of sorrow, suffering, and pain, that thou dost "not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men."

"Dost thou my profit seek,
And chasten as a friend?
O God, I'll kiss the smarting rod,—
There 's honey at the end.

Dost Thou, through death's dark vale,
Conduct to heaven at last?
The future good will make amends
For all the evil past.

Lord, I would not repine,
At strokes in mercy sent;
If the chastisement comes in love,
My soul shall be content."





SATANIC HINDRANCES.

"Satan hindereth us."—1 THESS. II. 18.

THE believer often feels, that he needs not external hindrances to try him, as he has enough within. But most of us find, that though our greatest hindrances are to be found in our own hearts, very great ones are to be found in the world, or are laid before us by Satan. If any one would have baffled, conquered, and overcome Satan entirely, one would have thought Paul could; for he was "not ignorant of his devices;" but Satan hindered *him*.

Who is Satan? A fallen spirit. Once an angel of light; once in high authority in heaven; but now fallen and depraved. He has lost his purity, but not his power. He is a most powerful foe. We have no adequate idea of what Satan can do on the bodies and souls of men, when he is permitted. He can use the elements, suggest thoughts, present pictures, hold out inducements, and craftily allure into the

commission of crime. He is most active. He goeth about. He is always in motion. He knows nothing of rest. He studies human nature. He watches opportunities. He lays his nets in the dark. Whoever sleeps, he is always awake. He is deeply experienced. He has been employed in ruining souls, hindering God's work, and distressing the Lord's people for near six thousand years. He knows what is likely to take, and when we are likely to be overcome. He has cast down many strong men wounded. He always turns his experience to account. He is full of determination. Though constantly failing, he does not appear to be discouraged. He will worry the sheep, if he cannot devour them. He will distress, if he cannot destroy. His very nature is enmity. Enmity to God, to his beloved Son, to his people, to his work, and to holiness, wherever it appears. The deep and active enmity of his nature will never allow him to rest, and, therefore, he is always plotting and planning against the cause of God, and the saints

of God. He bitterly hates whatever honours Jesus, or is calculated to benefit and save the immortal souls of man.

He appears to have myriads of fallen spirits like himself under his controul. These he directs and employs to carry out his purposes and his plans. He has an agent in every sinner's heart. An agent that is ever active and set upon mischief, therefore he is said to work "in the children of disobedience." He directs his spiritual and depraved legions, and they make use of human instrumentalities. Man is often Satan's weapon against his fellowman. By man he speaks. By man he writes. By man he acts on man very often. He can influence in ways of which we have little conception, and does so at times when we have no suspicion. He seduced Job's wife to tempt him, and Peter tried to try and mislead his Lord. Sometimes he uses bad men, especially when he employs violence, and sometimes he uses good men, particularly when he intends to work by influence, example, or soli-

citation. He tempts to sin on earth, and then accuses us of sin in heaven. He is "the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night." Courageous as a lion, subtle as a serpent, and terrible as a great red dragon, he goeth about seeking whom he may devour. What a terrible foe! What necessity there must be for caution, watchfulness, and prayer! Is it any wonder that we sometimes wander, stumble, or fall? Rather, is it not wonderful that we are what we are, or that we shall ever rise to be what we hope for? This must be ascribed to Jesus, who has bruised the serpent's head, and watched over us night and day.

What did Satan do? "He hindered us." So wrote the Apostle to the Thessalonians. He would have visited them before, more than once, but Satan hindered him. What, hinder an Apostle in his work! How wonderful! But *why*? Because he hates the truth, and would hinder its spreading. Truth is a portrait of God, and as he hates the original, he hates the

likeness also. Truth renders God known, and is the instrument by which souls are converted and sanctified to God; therefore Satan hates it, and tries to hinder it. Sometimes he leads men to mix up error with it, and, at other times, he stirs up those in authority to suppress it. Truth, pure truth, shall never spread, if Satan can prevent it. He tempts some to withhold the means, others to hold their tongues, and all to be indifferent about its circulation. He hates our comfort and happiness, and would deprive us of it. Unhappy himself, he cannot bear to see us happy. Consequently, he endeavours to keep from us, whatever would promote our solid, spiritual, and enduring happiness. O, the means he tries to keep us from the gospel, or the gospel from us! He hates our holiness, and will, if possible, prevent its cultivation. A mass of moral corruption himself, having every feature of God's likeness blotted out; he cannot bear to see us cleansed from filth, and restored to God's beauteous image. If he can tempt

us to sin, he has a feast, and we have a fast. He especially hates Jesus, and will to the uttermost oppose his cause. Therefore, just in proportion as we love him, and endeavour to further his cause, must we expect to be hated, opposed, and hindered by Satan. If our motives are impure, if we are careless about truth, if our end is self-aggrandisement, we may meet with little opposition; but so sure as love to Jesus and zeal for God influences us, so sure as the spread of the truth and the conversion of sinners to God is the end we aim at, so sure will Satan do his utmost to discourage, deter, and hinder us. He is the enemy of all righteousness, the bitter and determined enemy of Jesus, and all who sympathise with him, and endeavour to advance his kingdom and glory.

How does he hinder us? By raising persecution against the truth, and for the gospel's sake. This was the means he employed, especially in the apostolic age. He stirred up the rabble, he excited the

priests, and he influenced the magistrates; and all united with one firm determination to crush the Saviour's cause. Some were put to cruel deaths. Some were imprisoned. Some were banished. Some were flogged. Every means that cruelty and craft could devise was employed to "hinder the gospel of Christ," and to hinder holy and apostolic men in their work.—By fomenting divisions. Jews were set against Gentiles. One part of the church was excited against another part. Judaising teachers turned the minds of the brethren from those who had begotten them through the gospel. Contentions were awakened about meats and drinks, days and years. Paul was alienated from Barnabas, and Barnabas separated from Paul. Demas turned aside to the world, and John Mark left the ministry. Confusion and every evil work was introduced into the church, which made the Apostle sigh, and exclaim "*Satan hindered us!*"—By producing and deepening prejudice. A little thing will often produce prejudice,

and once produced Satan will fan it, foster it, and every way encourage it. Where prejudice reigns, love expires ; union ceases ! and a whole troop of evils are introduced.—By beguiling unstable souls. One great object of the Apostolic ministry was to establish and settle souls in the truth, but this they often found very difficult, for Satan beguiled many. By something novel, or something legal ; by austerity or libertinism, he beguiled and led away many ; so that those who ought to have been living for Jesus, were living to themselves ; and those who ought to have been spreading the truth for the benefit of others, were labouring to add something to the finished, complete, and glorious work of Christ. The introduction of error bewildered many minds, and cooled the zeal of many hearts. The faith of some was weakened, and the spirits of others were discouraged ; thus the work was hindered. This is just what Satan is doing now. His keen eye is fixed upon every man, and every little band who, with

honest hearts and simple minds, endeavour to extend God's cause. He will hate such with a bitter hatred. He will plot against such with hellish craft. He will try to hinder us with untiring zeal. He will stir up opposition without, and will influence some within, to endeavour to weaken their hands, and discourage their hearts. There will be sure to be a conflict, a severe conflict. If he can rock professors to sleep, if he can fascinate Christians with worldly grandeur, or get a people to be taken up with externals, he will not trouble them much; he knows they will not injure him, or make inroads on his kingdom. But let them wake up to their responsibilities, let zeal for Jesus and his truth fire their breasts, let them go forth and do God's work, and aim to save souls from death, from a pure motive, and if Satan does not try to hinder them he must "be divided against himself."

Bear in mind then, that Satan is a real person. Not an influence, or a principle, or a fable, but a person,—one who has a

powerful understanding, a capacious memory, a strong will, and a determined heart. Being spiritual in his nature, he is of course invisible; but because invisible, none the less real. He has great power and address, and, therefore, frequently carries his point, even against the cause and people of God. If he hindered Paul, is it any wonder if he hinders us? If he prevailed against him, shall we be surprised if he prevail against us? He is always at work to hinder the gospel of Christ. He never wearies of his work, nor does he appear to weary in it. He is permitted to do much mischief. When the seed is sown on the way side, "then cometh the devil, and catcheth away the seed out of the heart, lest they should believe and be saved." If we sow good seed in the Lord's field, this enemy follows, and sows tares. We had need therefore be always on our guard. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Peter neglected to watch, and Satan prevailed against him. Hezekiah neglected to watch,

and he prevailed against him. David neglected to watch, and he prevailed against him. Lot and Noah neglected to watch, and he prevailed against them. In every age, under every variety of circumstances, he has by his wit and vigilance prevailed against some. He uses all sorts of instruments, in the Church and out of it, good and bad, to accomplish his ends. If he can only do mischief, hinder God's cause, make the saint unhappy, and harden the sinner in his sins, he is pleased. What awful enmity must dwell in his heart! What a fountain of wickedness is found in his nature! How far, how wide his influence extends! How long and how extensively has his reign been permitted!

Let us then cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart. Let us daily cry to the strong for strength. Let us watch against this enemy of our souls, and endeavour to avoid even the appearance of evil. Let us look forward and anticipate the day when "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet." Let us not be

discouraged though he seems for a time to prevail against us, for if this enemy should for a season overcome, we shall overcome at the last. He is doomed and destined to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. The time is fixed when he shall be bound, and soon, very soon, we shall be for ever out of his reach. He may hinder us occasionally now, but when we arrive at our Father's house he will be permitted to hinder us no more. Jesus was once "manifested to destroy the works of the devil;" and when he comes again, his power to injure will terminate and we shall be for ever free from his influence. O, to be enabled to resist him, stedfast in the faith! To overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and the word of our testimony. As Jesus resisted and conquered in the wilderness, so may we resist and conquer him; and then go to sit down with our Lord on this throne even as he having overcome, sat down with his Father on his throne. Now is the time for conflict. The present world is the battle

field. We must either conquer or be conquered. Lord give us courage, confidence, and determined daring, that we may resist even unto blood, if called to do so, for the honour of thy name and cause.

“Soldiers of Christ arise,
And put your armour on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through his eternal Son :

Strong in the Lord of Hosts,
And in his mighty power,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts,
Is more than conqueror.

Stand, then, in his great might,
With all his strength endued ;
But take, to arm you for the fight,
The panoply of God :

To keep your armour bright,
Attend with constant care,
Still walking in your Captain's sight,
And watching unto prayer.

From strength to strength go on,
Wrestle, and fight, and pray,
Tread all the powers of darkness down
And win the well-fought day.”





NEVER DESPAIR.

Most of us are prone to give way to despondency, and there are many things to encourage this feeling. But let us ask, What good will despondency do us? In what part of God's word is despondency encouraged or commanded? Who ever derived any benefit from despondency? Despair! Who? Despair! Never. We would address these words especially to two classes.

First, *To sinners seeking salvation.* Fellow sinner, never despair. There is not the least cause for it. Hope! Ever hope. Are your sins many? Is your guilt great? Do gloomy thoughts crowd in upon your mind? Never despair, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all sin*. God stands solemnly pledged to pardon every sinner who confesses his sins at his throne. Your thoughts are wrong, exchange them for God's thoughts. His thoughts are

peaceful, merciful, and gracious. He will blot out your sins as a cloud, and your iniquities as a thick cloud. He will get glory to his own most holy name, by saving you freely by his grace. Does the Lord delay to answer your prayers? Don't despair, he only does this to deepen your conviction of sin, your sense of need, and your knowledge of yourself. He is proving you. He intends to answer you. He has passed his word that he will. Pray on. Pray more earnestly. Pray more frequently. Give him no rest. But, never despair, the answer may be delayed, but it will come at last. It may seem long on the road, but it will be all the sweeter when it arrives. Does Satan tempt you? Does he suggest that it is of no use for you to pray; that there is no mercy for you; that you are not in the covenant; that your day of grace is past; that you offend God by your importunity, because you are such a sinner? This in reality is a good sign. That cursed spirit, that enemy of all righteousness, never

troubles us thus but when he is afraid that he shall lose us. He is a liar, and has been so from the beginning. His aim is to distress you, to hinder you, to turn you back. Believe him not. Never despair, there is mercy for you, pardon for you, peace for you, full salvation for you ; *seek* and you *shall* find, ask until you receive, and by and bye, your joy will be full. Let this be your motto, NEVER DESPAIR.

Second, *To believers who wish, aim, and endeavour to be useful to souls.* Brethren, NEVER DESPAIR. You may be tried, and tried long. Your efforts may all seem to fail. Your sense of your own unworthiness may be painful, and you may seriously question if God can use one so vile, so utterly unworthy as you are. But never despair. Go on, sow with patience, even if you sow with tears. Try again after every seeming failure. "But I have been so often disappointed." Have you ? Never mind. This should only quicken your zeal, and nerve you to more determination. Your object is good. Your aim is right.

Your enterprise is noble. Satan does, he *must* hate it. But, *never despair*. He will try to discourage you. He will endeavour to drive you from the field. He has already driven many half-hearted labourers away. Let him not drive you. Stick to your work. Seek more grace from God, and then attempt greater things than ever for God. "But my foes succeed in their efforts against me." Do they? Let not that discourage you, much less lead you to despond. Their success is but partial. It is but transient. You will be like Gad, of whom it was predicted "Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last." Let the very success of your foes make you more determined. Say, I will now die sword in hand. If I am conquered, it shall be in the very act of endeavouring to bring souls to God. If my zeal for God has provoked men and made them my foes, I will provoke them yet more. If my activity has made me vile in their eyes, I will be more vile still, I will never despair

while God is faithful, while Jesus is an advocate before the throne, while the promise stands recorded in God's book, while there is power in prayer, or while God gives me either strength or opportunity to put forth an effort in his cause. Despair! What, while God is omnipotent! Despair! What! with sinners perishing all around me! Despair! What, with the history of God's successful servants in my hand! Never: for out of weakness they were made strong, they waxed valiant in fight, putting to flight the armies of the aliens. Nothing can injure us like unbelief. Nothing is so dishonourable to us as despair. Let us, therefore, be steadfast, and the more we are opposed by Satan or by man, so much the more let us expect the Lord to be with us, to work for us, and to glorify himself in us. Let us so believe, so live, so work, so war, so persevere in God's cause, as to *deserve* to have it inscribed on our tombstone, "*Here lies one who never despaired of God's mercy as a sinner, or of success in God's cause as*

a saint." What could be more honourable to us, or more encouraging to those we leave behind us, or more glorifying to our God? Slavish fear then, depart! Doubt, away! Unbelief, begone! Satan avaunt! Despair, farewell! Hope, lift up thy head! Faith, put forth thy power! Zeal, display thy energy! Spirit of the living God, lead us on to work, equip us for our work, bless us in our work, and crown our work with great success! Others have attempted, persevered, succeeded, and now rest from their labours; let us then be imitators of them who through faith and patience, now inherit the promises; for God is not unfaithful to forget our work and labour of love, but has promised, that in due season we *shall reap*, if we faint not. Let this then be our motto, upon which we are to throw light, and which we are to surround with a halo of glory, "NEVER, NEVER DESPAIR."



CHRIST LIVETH IN ME.

THIS was part of Paul's experience; and it is part of the experience of every true Christian. For God's mystery among the Gentiles, is Christ in us the hope of glory. Satan lived, ruled, and reigned in us once. But the strong man armed has been conquered and ejected. He worries, but he cannot devour us. He annoys, but he cannot destroy us. Jesus has entered, and taken possession. He is acknowledged as the lawful sovereign. He has put his laws into our hearts, and upon our minds has he written them. They are our rule. They justify or condemn our conduct. Conscience is influenced by them, appeals to them, and decides according to their requirements. Christ lives in our hearts, they are his home, his palace, his temple. There he resides, reigns, and is worshipped. Except the heart worship him, we cannot justly say, that he liveth in us. For he

will not enter in any character but that of king, or for any purpose but to rule. Happy is the heart where Jesus reigns, where Jesus is worshipped. Reader, have you this happiness? Let us examine, does Christ dwell in me, does he live in me?

Yes, Jesus lives in my *thoughts*. I daily, hourly, think of him. Whatever subject I forget, I cannot forget Jesus. His name is engraved on my memory. I think of him with pleasure and satisfaction. My sweetest thoughts are of Jesus. I love to think of him. I seldom weary of thinking of him. I think of his person, and adore him; of his blood, and trust in it; of his righteousness, and desire to be found in it; of his name, and plead it; of his mercy, and publish it; of his intercession, and rejoice in it; and of his second advent, and long for it. I enjoy thinking of Jesus as God, as man, as God man; as on earth, and as in heaven; of what he did, and what he said; of what he suffered, and what he procured; his la-

bouring as a servant, and ruling as a sovereign; of his first coming to atone for sin, and his second coming to glorify his people. No thoughts please me like thoughts of Jesus. A low thought of Christ distresses me; but high and honourable thoughts of him delight me. May I think of Jesus, while I can think at all. May my last thoughts in this world, as my soul hovers over the brink of eternity, be sweet and glorious thoughts of Christ.

Jesus lives in my *desires*. If I desire any person, it is Jesus. If I desire any knowledge, it is the knowledge of Jesus. If I desire any pleasure, it is to enjoy Jesus. If I desire any wealth, it is to possess the unsearchable riches of Christ. Yes, I cannot be deceived here; my soul desires Jesus,—to have him for my Saviour,—to possess him for my portion,—to enjoy him as my pleasure,—to walk with him as my friend,—to trust him as my Lord,—to worship him as my God,—to praise him as my Redeemer,—to exalt him as my boast and glory,—to claim and


live upon him as my all in all. In my darkest nights I desire to see Jesus. In my brightest day, I desire to realize the presence of Jesus. On the bed of pain, my soul cries out for Jesus. In health and prosperity, there is still the craving of the soul for Jesus. I do desire to know him, and the power of his resurrection. I do desire to be one with him, and enjoy his divine communications. Jesus is now the first, the last, the grand object of my desire. O, that when heart and flesh is failing, I may feel as Paul felt, and say as Paul said, "I have a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better."

Jesus lives in my *affections*. I *do* love him, though I do not love him as I ought, or as I wish. Nothing has troubled me more than the fear that I did not love him, or that my love was not spiritual love,—that I had made a mistake in this matter. Yet, surely, if I love any one, I love Jesus. I love his people, just in proportion as they appear to me to be like him. I love his word, especially when his Spirit shines


on the page, and reveals his glories. I love his ordinances, particularly when I see Jesus to be the sum and substance of them. I love that sermon most, that most highly exalts Jesus. I love that hymn most that is fullest of Jesus. I love that prayer most, that begins, proceeds, and ends with Jesus. I enjoy Christian converse, if it is about the person, perfection, work, or excellencies of Jesus. I love his dear, dear name. I never weary of it. To me there is none like it. I love his work though I am but a poor bungling hand at it. I love to think of his appearing; and the hope of seeing him, being with him, and being like him, is exquisitely sweet and pleasant to my soul. True, I sometimes doubt whether I do really love him, but then I am grieved, I wish I did, and I feel as if I would give a world to have a heart glowing with love to him. Could this be the case, if Jesus did not live in me? If he did not live in my affections? No, no, never! Jesus does live in me, or I should

never feel toward him, his people, his word, his ways, and his glorious appearing as I do.

Jesus lives in my *aims and pursuits*. I do aim at his glory. I do endeavour to pursue after those things which please him. I long to be holy, because Jesus loves holiness, and commands his people to be holy. I wish to be useful to his church, and in the world, because it will honour him. The thought of pleasing Jesus is generally pleasant to me. My aim is to be like him, to exalt him, to spread abroad the knowledge of his work, and to render his praise glorious. The object I pursue, is that for which he lived and died. In my best and most satisfactory moments, I wish only to purpose, plan, or pursue what will bring glory and honour to his most blessed name. And that work appears to me to be comparatively insignificant, which does not tend to exalt him, to bring sinners to him, or to render his saints more like him. Could this be the case if Jesus did not



live in me? If he did not live in my aims and pursuits? No, never. True, I feel, I know, that I often miss the mark. I often feel another mind working in me. There is flesh as well as spirit in my nature. There is the old man as well as the new in my bosom. I feel at times a deadly conflict, and imperfection is stamped on my best. Still the bent of my mind is to honour Jesus, the desire of my soul is to him. I *must* love him, or I should not think of him as I do; I should not grieve after his presence as I do; I should not sigh, groan, and cry, to possess him as my own. Nothing is so dreadful, as separation from Jesus. Nothing cuts so deep, as the fear lest I should be deceived, or mistaken, or find out at last that he is not mine. But, I am not deceived, I shall not be separated from him; for Christ dwelleth in me. Nor will you, reader, if your heart responds to what I have written, and your life proves that your heart is sincere. Christ must dwell in us here, if ever we dwell with Christ in another and



a better state. Christ in the head won't do ; it must be Christ in the heart. Christ on the tongue won't do ; it must be Christ dwelling in me. Holy Spirit ! examine the reader's heart, ransack his soul before his eyes, and give him to see whether Christ dwells in him or no, for thy mercy's sake.

“ Of all the joys we mortals know,
Jesus, thy love exceeds the rest !
Love, the best blessing here below,
The nearest image of the blest.
While we are held in thy embrace,
There's not a thought attempts to rove ;
Each smile upon thy beauteous face
Fixes, and charms, and fires our love.
While of thy absence we complain,
And long or weep in all we do,
There's a strange pleasure in the pain :
And tears have their own sweetness too.
When round thy courts by day we rove
Or ask the watchman of the night
For some kind tidings of thy love,
Thy very name creates delight.
Jesus, our God, yet rather come !
Our eyes would dwell upon thy face ;
'T is best to see our Lord at home,
And feel the presence of his grace.”



SIN AND SALVATION.

SIN. This is *wholly of man*. I have sinned! The law broken is the holy, just, and good law of God. Breaking that law was my own act and deed. I did it early. I have done it innumerable times, but always wilfully. My whole nature is set against the requirements of God's law. There is nothing the law requires, which I naturally like. I hate the whole of it. I love sin, almost every kind of sin. There is in my nature a craving to commit sin. God requires truth, my nature often prefers a lie. God requires honesty, I am naturally dishonest, God requires purity, my nature loves to revel in impurity. God requires contentment with what he has given me, I covet whatever I see others have, which I have not. He requires me to be under authority, I hate authority, I rebel against it, I prefer licentious freedom. He refuses to be repre-

sented by pictures or images, I am for the visible in preference to the invisible. In a word, I know of nothing that God approves, that my nature does not dislike; nothing that he requires, that I do not feel inclined to refuse; nothing that he prohibits, but I would like under certain circumstances, to do; nothing that he withholds, but I wish for; nothing that he bestows, but I more or less despise. Indeed, I do not conceive how anything can be more opposed to the character and requirements of God, than my nature is. There is something in every attribute, in every precept, in every dispensation that I am prepared to quarrel with. I should like others to keep certain requirements of the law towards me, but I should like to be left without any restraint as to my conduct towards them. My nature wishes to be lawless. That it has not carried out these accursed principles in action more than it has, is to be ascribed to the restraints of education, the influence of circumstances, and the preventing grace of

God. Now, I ask, would not God be just in damning such a wretch? Can such a creature have any claim upon God, under such circumstances? Can such a being possess the power to make himself holy, or become what God requires, either in the law or the gospel? As all man's wickedness proceeds from his heart, and is approved of by him, is he not guilty as well as vile? If he has no wish or desire, and, therefore, never heartily presents a prayer to God, of himself, for a change of nature, is not God most just in punishing him? I feel, my conscience allows, that God would be just in sending me to hell. My nerves tremble at the thought; the flesh, full of self pity, cries out against the idea; but my inmost spirit realizes that it would be just. The idea is dreadful! The thought piercing! But the fact is unquestionable, undeniable. Sin is wholly from man. The sin that brings a man under the sentence of the gospel, that sinks the soul to hell, is his *own sin*. The sin he conceived in his heart, the sin he

loved and preferred to holiness, the sin he committed at the risk of eternal punishment. O, what a depraved nature is mine! How much cause I have to hate myself! How low I ought always to lie before God! How softly should I go all my days in the bitterness of my soul. Who would fancy that such a creature could be proud? That such a sinner could complain of God? But this is only the effect of having a sinful nature.

Salvation. This is *wholly of God*. It must be so. What can such a sinner do to save himself? Can he atone for his sins? How? In every act is sin, all he does is polluted. Can he change his nature? How? What, act contrary to the principles that rule him? Run opposite to his own will? Conquer every affection and habit, when he has no disposition to do so, nor the least wish? Man may fear wrath, and wish to escape punishment, while left to himself; but man never did, man never will, man never can, wish to be made holy, until the Spirit of God has

touched his heart. Fire may as soon freeze water, and water may as soon feed fire, as a sinner really and truly desire to be made holy without the Spirit of God. It cannot possibly be. If a sinner is saved, it is an act of grace; it is in the exercise of sovereignty; it is wholly of God. Sinners *are* saved, because God becomes their Saviour. Jesus took the sinner's place. He offered a sacrifice which satisfied the demands of justice, met all the requirements of God's righteous government, and opened a way by which any sinner may obtain the pardon of all sin, on honourable terms. God appeared in Christ with a heart full of love, to reconcile sinners to himself; in order to which he tells us, that he will not impute our trespasses to us: yea, he assures us that he has imputed them all to his dear Son, and has made him a sin-offering for us, to expiate and put away our sins: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We have nothing to do with satisfying justice, meeting the claims

of law, or pacifying the wrath of God ; all this is done, done perfectly, and done for ever. If we *believe* this, if we come to God believing it, and so expect pardon, peace, and acceptance, on account of what Jesus did and suffered, we are saved. To every sinner, the gospel says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." What, by simple faith? Yes, by simple faith. But does God require nothing at my hands? He requires nothing at thy hands. There is nothing that he bestows more freely than salvation. Not the light at morning, nor the dew at evening, nor the shower that cometh in its season. There is nothing that he bestows more cheerfully, more readily, for "he delighteth in mercy." "Then one man is saved through the righteousness of another." Yes, just so. The life, death, resurrection, and intercession of Jesus, forms *that*, and *the whole of that*, on account of which any sinner is saved. Salvation is wholly of God. The first thought of salvation was of God. The purpose and

the plan are of God. The atonement, the revelation, the proclamation, and the application, are of God. If I feel I need salvation, God produced that feeling. If I desire to be saved, God gave me that desire. If I am willing to be saved in God's way, he has made me willing. If I pray to be saved by grace, his Spirit breathed that prayer into my soul. If I perceive God's method of salvation, it is because the Holy Spirit has opened my eyes, and shined into my heart. If I believe in Jesus, my very faith is the gift of God. "Then no man ever would be saved, but for God's most gracious interference." Not one. "Then all who are saved, are saved gratuitously." Exactly so, "to the praise of his glorious grace." "And may any sinner be saved now if he really desires it?" Yes, "whosoever will may come, and take of the fountain of the water of life freely." "But how is it, so many doubt, fear, and despond?" Because seeing and feeling their own sins and sinful state, and not clearly perceiving that

God saves sinners freely, without money and without price, they look into themselves for something to recommend them, or for something to encourage their faith, instead of looking simply to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. They do not receive God's testimony as given in his own word but think that something must be done by them, or felt within them, in order to entitle them to salvation. This dishonours God. This grieves the Holy Spirit. This encourages unbelief. This gives power to Satan. And in order to strip them of this idea, they are allowed to try what they can do; the law makes its demands upon them, Satan harasses and torments them, until self despair seizes them, and then they are glad to "embrace the Rock for the want of a shelter." The moment we see God's method of salvation by grace, through the obedience and blood-shedding of Jesus, approve of it, and exercise confidence in it, we are at peace. Our sins are pardoned, our fears are conquered, our enemy loses his power over us, and we see

that "God is love." And this peace is maintained, just so long, and just in proportion, as we continue to look away from everything within us, and everything done by us to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. But the moment our eye is taken off him, our fears return, our hearts harden, our spirits sink, and our evidences are beclouded. Therefore we are directed to run the race set before us "looking unto Jesus." In health, we must look to Jesus, if we would have peace. In sickness, we must look to Jesus, if we would bear it with patience. In death we must look to Jesus, if we would meet it with comfort and courage.

Reader, are you saved? Do you realize the fact daily in your own soul? Can you go with the writer in the first part of this subject, that sin is wholly of man? That your sin is wholly of yourself? and that by sinning you have destroyed yourself? That God had nothing to do with this? Do you acquiesce in the second part, that salvation is wholly of God? These are the two

great points in real religion. Our views on other points will be sound or erroneous, very much in proportion to these, for our views of these points will influence all the rest. In conclusion, if you would honour God, if you would conquer Satan, if you would overcome the world, if you would suppress fear, if you would enjoy comfort, if you would walk with God in peace and holiness, look away *from* everything else, and look away *to* Jesus only. He is saying to you, "*Look unto me and be ye saved.*" And "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Study these points, that sin comes wholly by man, and salvation wholly by Jesus. Sin is man's act, salvation is God's gift. Punishment is from justice, salvation is from grace.





DO YOU BELONG TO JESUS?


THE Lord Jesus has a people peculiarly his own. He claims them. They are his, for his Father gave them to him. They are his, for he bought them with his own blood. They are his, for he called them by his own Spirit. They are his, and he visits them, cares for them, leads them, protects them, is now preparing mansions for them, and will soon come and receive them unto himself, that where he is, there they may be also. Happy are the people who belong to Jesus. Precious Saviour, I value this distinction above any, above all that earth can bestow! May I belong to Jesus, and I ask no more.

Friend, do you belong to Jesus? Do you *know* him? What are your views of him? Have you had any *personal dealings* with him? If you belong to Jesus, you do know him, for he says, "I know my sheep, and *am known of*

mine.” You know his name, and trust in it. You know his blood and rely on it. You know his promise and believe in it. You know his will, and endeavour to do it. You know his fellowship, and seek to enjoy it. You know his person, and love it. If you belong to Jesus, you have scriptural views of him. To you, he is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. You view him as more necessary to your soul than light, air, food, or clothing is for your body. You feel as if you could never prize him enough, praise him enough, or enjoy him enough. “To you that believe, he is precious.” Incomparably precious ! Inconceivably precious ! If you belong to Jesus, you have had personal dealings with him : you have gone to him as a poor guilty sinner seeking a Saviour : you have cast yourself at his feet, you have ventured your soul on his blood, obedience, and word ; and you have found peace in believing on him. If you have once had personal dealings with Jesus, you have often done so. Hence Peter

writes, "Unto whom *coming*, as unto a living stone." Having once come to him we continue coming. We bring our sins to him to be pardoned, our wants to be supplied, our grievances to be redressed, our sorrow to be sanctified, and our souls to be comforted and completely saved. If you belong to Jesus, you have found peace in his blood, comfort in his love, and liberty in doing his will. Jesus is your all. Your faith centres in him. Your hope is built on him. Your love ascends to him. Your brightest prospect is to be for ever with him.


Do you belong to Jesus, and yet keep aloof from his people? You ought to be united to them, to walk with them, and to prize their fellowship. Sheep love to be in flocks. Saints love to be in fellowship with each other. Do you belong to Jesus, and never speak of him? You should speak of him to his foes, and try to win them; to his friends to cheer and delight them. Do you belong to Jesus, and not work for him? He has given to every



man his work. He expects all that belong to him to be employed for him. He meets those who work righteousness, and rejoice in his ways. Meeting them, he renders them happy, successful, and honourable. He wrought for us once, and we are to work for him now. Do you belong to Jesus, and yet neglect to meet him at his throne ? He invites you to come. To come boldly ; to come often. He loves to see you there. He loves to hear your voice. No music is so sweet to him as the voices of his people offering prayer and praise. Do you belong to Jesus, and yet neglect his ordinances ? You ought to profess faith in his name by baptism, and to commemorate his love at his own table. He points to the breaking of bread, and says, "Do this in remembrance of me." He is always at the table himself, and he wishes us to be there. Little things should never keep us away. Differences with our fellow believers should not keep us away. Jesus does not say, "If all is comfortable, if every one is


agreeable, if there is nothing whatever amiss, then meet and remember me." No, but he simply says, "Do it in remembrance of me," and we ought to be quite sure that he will justify our absence before staying away.

Do you belong to Jesus, and still mix up with the world? Has he not said, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate?" Is not the world peopled with his enemies? Does not his Apostle say, "If any man will be the friend of the world, he is the enemy of God? Surely, if you are one of Christ's sheep, he will set his mark upon you, and that mark will distinguish you from the world around you. The mark that Jesus puts on his people is *holiness*. Holiness, that appears in hatred to sin, imitation of Jesus, and consecration to the service of God. If we are holy it will appear in our spirit and temper, in our conduct and conversation, in our separation from the world and dedication to the service of God. If we are holy, the Bible will be our guide, the



Holy Spirit our teacher, and the exaltation of the Lord Jesus the great object of our life. Do you belong to Jesus, and encourage a sectarian spirit? Does not Jesus love *all* his people? Does he not love them all *alike*? Does he not wish them to walk together as brethren, as fellow heirs of the grace of life. Suppose one uses a form, and another worships without. Suppose one is an episcopalian, and another a congregationalist. Should these points alienate our affections? Will such matters justify our indulging in a sour, bitter, censorious, proud, or selfish spirit? Is not separation for such matters a proof that we are very carnal, and have but little of the spirit? Jesus has but one body, of which he is the head; but one flock, of which he is the shepherd; but one bride, of which he is the bridegroom. The parts may be scattered abroad at present, but they will be collected and brought together by and bye. If we really belong to Jesus, let us prove it by doing as Jesus commands us. "A new commandment I

give unto you, that ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." This command of Jesus is sacred : it is binding on us all. It should, if possible, be carried out to the very letter. Do you belong to Jesus ? Is it doubtful ? Are you of those who call him, " Lord, Lord, but do not the things " that he has said ? Have you faith in Jesus ? Have you committed your soul to his keeping ? Is he your daily bread ? Is he the only ground of your hope ? Do *you* doubt whether you belong to Jesus ? If you do, let me ask, do you belong to Satan ? Do you own him as your lord ? Do you obey him ? Or, do you belong to the world ? Is the world your master ? Do you follow its customs, its maxims, its fashions ? Do you breathe its spirit, enjoy the company of its citizens, and prize its empty pleasures ? *Whose are you ?* This ought to be decided. Do you wish to belong to Jesus ? Are you willing to make a full surrender of yourself to Jesus ? Will you look away from every thing within you,



and every thing done by you, to Jesus alone, and expect a full salvation by simply looking to him? If so, you belong to Jesus. But if you cannot trust him to save you, without money and without price; if you must join something you feel, or something you do with the work of Jesus, to assure you of salvation, there is reason to fear that you do not belong to Jesus. Let me entreat you to venture your naked soul on him, look simply and alone to him, trust wholly and altogether to him, and then you are saved. Then you belong to Jesus, and Jesus with all he has belongs to you. You are his beloved child, and he is your Father. You are his much prized sheep, and he is your shepherd. You are a branch, and he is the living vine that quickens, supports, supplies, and nourishes you up to everlasting life. Oh to be one of those who belong to Jesus, when he comes "to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe!"



FOR WHOM AND WHAT DID CHRIST
DIE?

FOR *whom* did Christ die? *Christ died for the ungodly.* Such was my character by nature, for I had not one spark of godliness in me. I was not only a stranger to the power of godliness, but I was destitute of the form. If Jesus died for the ungodly, then *why not for me?* *Christ died for sinners.* Such as were entirely sinful, whose natures were depraved, whose conduct was perverse and wicked. For sinners, who had nothing to recommend them to his notice, or to warrant them to expect any blessing from his hands. If Jesus died for sinners, *why not for me?* I am a sinner, a poor miserable sinner. No one ever needed a Saviour more. No one ever deserved a Saviour less. But as a physician gets fame and honour, by healing desperate cases, may not Jesus get honour by *saving me?* *Christ*

died for enemies. Such as were opposed to him, whose hearts were enmity against him, who never thought well of him, or had any desire to be under an obligation to him; nor ever would, if their hearts were not changed by a divine power. Awful to say, but I was an enemy to God, and showed my enmity by wicked works! I never loved him. I had no wish to know him. I dreaded him, because he was holy. I wished there was no God, except he were one that would tolerate and sanction sin; one that would be ruled by my depraved principles and passions. How awful it is to look back, and see what we have been, what we have done, what we have said, what we have been afraid to say, but have thought! No one knows what is in a man's heart but himself. No one knows what is working in a man's bosom but himself. How fearful would be the exposure of one's thoughts! But what can be worse than to be the enemies of the God of love? Such were some of us. Such was I, and yet if Jesus died for the

enemies of God, for his own enemies, *why not for me ?* Yes, though I was ungodly, a sinner, an enemy of God and his Christ ; yet as Jesus died for the ungodly, for sinners, for enemies, *I will believe that he died for me.*

For *what* did Christ die ? *Christ died for our sins.* To make an atonement for them. To satisfy the claims which divine justice had upon sinners. To meet all the demands of the righteous and immutable law of God. He allowed them to be placed to his account, To be imputed to his person, so that he became responsible for them. Therefore, he bore them, or the desert of them in his own body on the tree. He put them away by the sacrifice of himself. I would therefore look upon Jesus as standing in my place, as suffering my desert, as expiating my iniquity, as meeting all the claims which law and justice could make upon me. Precious Saviour ! I do bless thy dear and adorable name for becoming my surety, for offering *thyself* a sacrifice for my sins, and for

working out and bringing in a perfect and everlasting righteousness to clothe my soul. Christ died to *deliver us from this present evil world*. To deliver us from the power of the god of this world, from the spirit of this world, and from its fearful doom. Satan possessed us and wrought in us, the customs of the world controlled us, and we were doomed to suffer with the world. But Jesus loved us, pitied us, and determined to deliver us. He therefore died for us, to remove all legal difficulties out of the way. He procured the spirit to quicken, teach, sanctify, and emancipate us. Therefore, though in the world, we are not of the world, for Jesus died to deliver us from it, raise us above it, and make us useful to it. Christ died *to bring us to God*. His death removed every obstacle, opened a new and living way, and brings down the Holy Spirit into our hearts. So that now we come to God as sinners, as sinners to be pardoned, justified, accepted, protected, preserved, and supplied. By and bye, we shall come

to God as saints, as saints to be acknowledged, approved, crowned, and glorified. Such was the design of the death of Jesus. O, Saviour! but for thy life and death, I must have perished in my sins, I must have been condemned with the world, I never, never should have come to God, until dragged before him to receive an awful sentence from him! I owe every thing to thee! I trace every good thing I have or expect, to thy cross! Without thee, I should be the vilest of human kind, the most wretched being in God's vast creation! But with thee I have hope, I have confidence, I have comfort, I have a prospect of everlasting glory! Blessed be thy holy and glorious name for ever! I will bless thee while I live, and praise thy name for ever and ever. I know I have come to God as a poor sinner, and though at times I can only sigh and groan before his throne of grace; yet, if thou hadst not died for me, if thou hadst not pitied me, if thou hadst not sent thy Holy Spirit to me, I had never, never come at all. No,

I feel confident I never should. If thou hadst not died for my sins, to deliver me from this present evil world, and to bring me to God, I had this day been as I once was, far off from God by wicked works, and had remained so for ever. Therefore, I rejoice in thy death, glory in thy cross, and bless most heartily thy dear and adorable name.

“ Redeemer! whither should I flee,
Or how escape the wrath to come?
The weary sinner flies to thee,
For shelter from impending doom :
Smile on me, gracious Lord, and show
Thyself the friend of sinners now !

Beneath the shadow of thy cross
The heavy-laden soul finds rest ;
I would esteem the world but dross,
So I might be of Christ possess'd !
I borrow every joy from thee,
For thou art life and light to me.

Close to the ignominious tree
Jesus! my humbled soul would cleave !
Despis'd and crucified with thee,
With Christ resolv'd to die and live ;
My prayer, my grand ambition this,
Living and dying to be his !”



THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION.

"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption."—ROM. viii. 15.


ADOPTION is an act of God, whereby he takes sinners, who were enemies to him and rebels against him, and constitutes them his children. It is an act of grace. Of free and sovereign grace; for there was nothing in them, done by them, or expected from them, that could form a reason why this favour should be conferred upon them. It was in the mind of God from eternity, therefore we read that we were "predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, to the praise of his glorious grace." And again, "predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." The Father chose his people in Jesus, he appointed them to the adoption of children, he gave them into the hands of his Son, and all this before the foundation

of the world. What love! What free love!

According to divine appointment, the children are brought into being at different periods, in different places, and in different circumstances. They are regenerated or born again by the power of the Holy Spirit. But while they remain under the legal covenant, or look to God, in whole or part, through the medium of his law, they are in bondage. Fear rules the heart: doubt agitates the spirit: conscience annoys or terrifies by its accusations. The soul pines for something it has not, though perhaps it scarcely knows what that is. It wants liberty. Freedom from the servant's yoke. It was formed for freedom, to enjoy a divine relationship. For this it pines, and pants, and sighs. When it hears others call God Father, it sighs out "O that he was my Father!" When it hears others talk of liberty, access to God, confidence in God, and boldness before God, it groans with strong desire to enjoy the same; but it is sometimes

long before the Spirit of adoption is received and enjoyed. But until it is, the quickened soul will struggle, groan, pray, aspire, and hope that the day of its freedom may come, that the trump of Jubilee may be heard within; and the spirit of a slave be exchanged for the spirit of a child.

Sometimes the "Spirit of adoption," almost imperceptibly glides into the soul. All is calm, still, and quiet. The chains are knocked off without any noise. The burden falls from the shoulders, and the yoke is destroyed because of the anointing. The blood of atonement silences the accusations of conscience; some precious word or sweet view of Jesus quells our doubts, removes our fear, and melts down our hearts. God is stripped of all his terrible attributes, and appears before us a "God merciful and gracious," "ready to pardon;" rejoicing to do us good, whose terrors will not make us afraid, neither will his hand be heavy upon us. His love is sweetly shed abroad in our hearts, and we feel that




we love him, can be confident before him, and boldly plead with him. The most pleasing sensations are awakened in the mind, and almost unconsciously we look up and "cry Abba, Father." We wonder at our own boldness, and yet the very word "Father" sounds like music in the soul. Satan for a time withdraws his accusations and ceases to tempt. We are left to enjoy the pleasing scene alone. Our Father seems to press us to his bosom, and we feel a little heaven while reclining there. We can now pray and praise with freedom, love, and joy. "Old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new." This is the joy of heart which a stranger intermeddleth not with. This is that "oil of joy" which glides sweetly into the soul, softening, perfuming, and elevating as it goes. It follows the mourning for sin, the sighing for freedom, the groaning for the enjoyment of paternal love. It is a sure evidence of adoption, the proof that we are the sons of God.

In other instances the entrance of "the Spirit of adoption" is more sudden, startling, and striking. Up to a particular time all has been gloom, guilt, darkness, bondage, fear of death, and dread of eternal banishment from God. The spirit has been contracted, the heart hard, the conscience restless, and the whole inner man bound hand and foot. Satan has harassed with a thousand temptations. Past sins, present guilt, and future punishment, have been the subjects that have filled the meditations and harassed the soul. Under these circumstances, when despair has been brooding over the spirit, in a moment a change has been experienced. Some portion of God's word, some view of Jesus, some ray of light from God's countenance, or some sweet inward whisper has effected an instantaneous and wondrous change. The chains of guilt have fallen off, darkness has fled, confidence has sprung up, joy has flowed in, and the soul has been almost bewildered with the ravishing enjoyment. "God is my Father," is the

; exclamation. "My fears are all
idless: my sins are pardoned: my
is saved: heaven and all its glories
ine," are the thoughts which fill the
1. Little is left to pray for, but the
r spirit wants to be freed from every
gement and incumbrance, that it may
b, bless, and adore its gracious God.
empty and worthless earthly things
r now! How surprised the emanci-
soul is to see professors so taken up
and concerned about temporal things.
now "abundantly satisfied with the
ss of God's house," and is drinking
draughts of the river of his plea-
. O the sweet peace, the ravishing
the ecstatic delights that are now
ienced! These things are not com-
r enjoyed for long; for if they were
ould be unfit for business, or any of
uties of the present life. But who
orget the season? How sweet at
to look back upon it, and draw
raging inferences from it. Years
we seem to have the scenes of it


return, when we look back and seem to enter into all the pleasing circumstances again. A lodging place in the wilderness to spend the time in sweet communion with God, uninterrupted and undisturbed; or the wings of a dove to fly up to Jehovah's bright abode are all that the soul now seems to long for.

"The Spirit of adoption" keeps God's paternal character more or less before us, and enables us to believe the love that he hath to us. Under its influence and teaching we learn to trust his promises, watch his providence, wait at his throne, and expect to receive good things from him. The world is our Father's world. The church is our Father's family. Heaven is our Father's house. Our feelings are filial. We view God so differently to what we did before, that our feelings toward him are completely changed. True we have to endure the inward conflict, to battle with doubts and fears, to be teased and tormented with worldly cares: yet in proportion as we live up to our privilege and



walk with God in humility, peace, and fellowship, we rise above them or overcome them. No life is to be compared to the life of the Christian, while he lives and walks, and works under the influence of the "Spirit of adoption."

The blessed Spirit who reveals the divine relationship to us at first, witnesses to it afterwards. Yea, he is himself the witness; not only so, but the earnest of our future inheritance. Hence the Apostle writes to the Ephesians, "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Beloved, have you received "the Spirit of adoption?" Does he dwell, and work, and witness in your heart that you are a child of God? Do you live realizing that God is your Father, and do you love him, trust him, obey him, and worship him as such? "The Spirit of adoption" is a loving spirit, and while it fills your heart with love to God, it will fill your heart

with love to all God's children too. "He that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him." "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother abideth in death." May "the Spirit of adoption" work more powerfully in all our hearts, and fill us with filial love to God, and fraternal love to all the saints. His presence and power in the heart will keep religion alive there: not only so, but will make us happy, holy and useful in our day and generation. God loves to hear us call him Father, and, act toward him as loving children. There is no relation so frequently brought before us in his word as this, nor is there any relation more fraught with comfort and consolation. What a mercy to have God for my Father, and to know that he will do a Father's part by me in all the trials, troubles, and perplexities of this mortal life. Holy and ever blessed God, let thy love be daily shed abroad in my heart, and  thou draw out and fix my love upon

thyself continually ! O that I could, and did, love thee with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength, every moment, and for evermore ! To this end take a full, entire, and immediate possession of me, and rule in my heart, the Lord of every emotion.

“Descend, immortal Dove ;
Spread thy kind wings abroad ;
And wrapt in flames of holy love,
Bear all my soul to God.

Jesus, my Lord, reveal
In charms of grace divine,
And be thyself the sacred seal,
That pearl of price is mine.

Behold my heart expands
To catch the heavenly fire :
It longs to feel the gentle bands,
And groans with strong desire.

Thy love, my God, appears,
And brings salvation down,
My cordial through this vale of tears,
In Paradise my crown.”





DIVINE EQUITY.


**"He will not lay upon man more than right."—
JOS xxxiv. 23.**

THE burdens of the Christian are often heavy. The flesh cries out. The spirit is almost ready to complain. If he loses sight of the first great cause, his courage fails, his patience gives way, and the enemy prevails against him. But if he can see the Lord's hand, though he may not be able to trace out the cause of his sufferings, yet he is silent, he knows it is right. The Lord lays on our burdens, and he lays them on just where he pleases. He fixes the weight, and he appoints the place on which every one is laid. Whatever he does is right. If God burden us it is right. Laid on the right part, at the right time, in right measure. "He will not lay on man more than is right." He cannot be unjust. He will not be unkind. Christian, is thy trial in the body, or the soul?

In the family or the business? In the church, or in the world? Does it lay principally on the head, or the heart? On the flesh or the spirit? Remember, the Lord laid it on. There is no mistake. It is not unnecessary. It is not too heavy. Complaining will do no good, praying will. Pettishness will increase the weight, but patience will lighten it. Let every pain prompt a prayer. Let every groan be vented at the throne of grace. The Lord's hand laid on thy present burden, and the Lord's eye is watching how you bear it. He intends your good by it. It is not for his pleasure, but for your profit, that you may partake of his holiness.

My soul, however severe thy trial, however heavy thy cross, endeavour to bear it in silence. Or, only let thy voice be heard at thy Father's throne. The Lord is right in trying thee thus, and thou wilt see it by and bye. It is not too heavy a trial, and thou wilt acknowledge that also when thou art delivered. The proud spirit must be humbled. The flesh must be

mortified. The grace given must be employed. The vessel of mercy must be polished, and thus prepared for glory. Present sorrows are the seed of future joys. The cross will prepare for the crown. The night of suffering will usher in the morning of joy, the never-ending day of peace and pleasure, Once in paradise, we shall soon forget the privations of the world. Once glorified with Jesus, the present will appear so different to what it does now. Let the eye of faith be fixed on the hope laid up for us in heaven. Let hope anticipate the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus. Let thought rush into the future, and, like the Israelitish spies, bring the fruits of the promised land into, the desert. There is an end to every trial, and it may be much nearer than we expect. There is a time coming, when every tear shall be wiped away, every groan shall be hushed into silence; or rather, when the cause of groans and tears shall be for ever done away. He who has promised to come, will come; and even



before he comes to us in glory, he will come in grace, filling us with all joy and peace in believing. Jesus, the faithful Jesus, sympathises with us, and will soon deliver us. Until then let this soothe, silence, and satisfy us, "*He will not lay upon man more than right.*"

"Saviour, I thy word believe,
My unbelief remove ;
Now thy quickening Spirit give,
The unction from above :
Show me, Lord, how good thou art, -
My soul with all thy fulness fill,
Send the witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal.

Blessed Comforter, come down,
And live and move in me ;
Make my every deed thine own,
In all things led by thee.
Bid my sins and fears depart,
And with me O vouchsafe to dwell ;
Faithful witness, in my heart
Thy perfect light reveal.

Whom the world cannot receive,
Lord, manifest in me ;
Son of God, I cease to live,
Unless I live to thee :
Make me choose the better part,
Display thy love, my pardon seal,
Send the witness, in my heart
The Holy Ghost reveal."



WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

ONE who really believes the gospel. Who so believes it as to be influenced by it. Whose faith is an inward persuasion to its truth, a consciousness of its divinity. Who believing he is a sinner, as God has testified, feels that he is a sinner, lost, ruined, and undone. Who, as a sinner, renounces self, relies on the blood of Christ, and looks for acceptance with God only on the ground of his finished work. To him the gospel is good news. To him Jesus is every way suited. To him, a free pardon is just what he needs. To him Christ becomes wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Yea, all in all.

A Christian is one who imbibes the Spirit of Christ, which Spirit is holy, humble, docile, loving, lamblike. Christ becomes his pattern, and to be exactly like Christ, his desire and aim. Whatever he discovers in himself unlike Christ

he condemns, and seeks grace to rectify or remove it. While he trusts in the obedience of Christ alone, for justification ; he desires and seeks for sanctification, as if he trusted alone in that. Could he be just alike Jesus, he would be satisfied. For this he would willingly give up everything else. To this he aspires as the highest object of his hope and ambition. To him it is not so much where he is, as what he is ; and he is not so much affected by his circumstances, as by the state of his heart.

A Christian is one who is influenced by the love of Christ. He feels in some degree as Paul felt, and therefore can say, as he said, "The love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ as exhibited in the gospel, awakens love in his heart ; and fellowship with Christ strengthens and increases the love produced. This stimulates him to obedience, and produces a desire to glorify him by every word and work. He obeys because he loves, and he loves because he is be-

loved. The love of Jesus to him made him what he is ; and love to Jesus working within him, makes him long and endeavour to be whatever Jesus requires of him.

A Christian then is one who believes the gospel in his heart, who imbibes and exhibits the spirit of Christ in his life, who is influenced by the love of Christ, and who makes the precepts of Christ his rule. Christ for him before God, justifies him ; Christ in his heart, sanctifies him ; and Christ coming to be glorified in his saints, excites his hope and his desires. His religion begins with Christ, stands in Christ, and will be perfected in the presence of Christ, and exact conformity to him. His life is from Christ, his motives are from Christ, his comforts are from Christ, and his rule is from Christ. With him Christ is first, last, and middle. Reader, are you a Christian ? Do you know Jesus ? Do you confide in him ? Do you love him ? Do you imbibe his *Spirit* ? Do you study, and copy his ex-

ample? Do you sigh for and seek his presence? Do you habitually aim at his glory? Do you rejoice to see him exalted, extolled, and set on high? "A Christian is the highest style of man;" the finest production of the divine power; the highest object of God's infinite love. Oh, to be a Christian indeed, and to share with Christians in life, death, and for ever!

" Eternal Sun of righteousness,
Display thy beams divine,
And cause the glory of thy face
Upon my heart to shine.
Light in thy light O may I see,
Thy grace and mercy prove,
Reviv'd and cheer'd, and blest by thee,
The God of pardoning love.
Lift up thy countenance serene,
And let thy happy child
Behold, without a cloud between,
The Godhead reconcil'd :
That all-comprising peace bestow,
On me through grace forgiven,
The joys of holiness below,
And then the joys of heaven."



SORROW.

"And they were exceedingly sorrow."—**MATT. xvii. 22.**

It is a common impression that happiness arises from circumstances, but it is false. We are more affected by thoughts than by things; and happiness depends on the state of the heart, not on any outward circumstances. Many have thought that if they had lived in the days of our Lord's flesh; if they had been called by his voice; if they had followed in his train; if they had witnessed his miracles, and heard the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, they would have been happy. But it is of such that the record is made, "And they were exceeding sorry."

This was occasioned by the information he had just given them that he should be betrayed, murdered, and then rise again. They found that to increase in knowledge was to increase in sorrow. They could not endure the thought that their Master

should be treated thus. It made them very unhappy. They were deeply grieved, and sorrow filled their hearts. This arose very much from their ignorance ; they did not understand the design of his death, and the necessity there was for it. Had they seen that he was their substitute, that he was come to satisfy divine justice for their sins and to save them for his own glory, it would have moderated their sorrow, if it had not prevented it. But love was the cause of their suffering. They loved Jesus sincerely : they loved his person, his company, his doctrine, and his cause. They could not bear the idea of being separated from him or of his being treated so cruelly, so wickedly. Love heard his communication, love looked in his benignant countenance, love thought of his being betrayed and killed, and it stirred up deep and heart-felt sorrow. "*They were exceeding sorry.*"


It was quite natural for them to feel thus, and there can be no doubt but it was natural sorrow. There was also some

degree of selfishness in it. Fallen man at the best is a selfish being. They thought of the loss they should sustain. They felt the disappointment of their hopes. They questioned what they should do when these things came to pass. They might have feared that they also would have to suffer with him. We are ever ready to look forward to find causes for sorrow. As though human nature loved to distress itself, it will plunge into futurity to find reasons to be unhappy. Doubtless their sorrow was evanescent. It soon exhausted itself, and they returned to their former easy and comfortable state. Great sorrow seldom lasts long. We cannot bear much grief, and God in his mercy will not allow more to be laid on us than we are able to bear. Hope comes in to our rescue. It fixes its eye on the bow in the cloud. It pictures brighter scenes before the eye. It softly sings of happier, better times. Faith will lay fresh hold on the promise, press it to the heart, and produce inward satisfaction from the assurance of its cer-

tain fulfilment. No, it is not all sorrow. We are not always sad. The time will soon come when there shall be no more sorrow, but God, even our own God, will wipe away all tears from our eyes. Blessed time ! May the Lord hasten it, if his will.

Only three things should ever cause us sorrow now. The first and principal is *sin*. Yes, sin demands sorrow. And except sorrow produces gloom, or leads to despondency and despair, we cannot be too sorry for sin. We daily sin ; and, therefore, for sin we should daily mourn. Not that our tears will ever atone for our sins, or wash out one stain of sin from our souls ; but they prove that we are affected by it, that our hearts are set against it, and that we are really sorry for it. The second is, the sufferings of Jesus. We should look on him whom we have pierced, and mourn for him. Let us often visit Gethsemane, and there hold fellowship with our agonizing Lord, until our hearts are properly affected, and our deep sorrow is stirred. Let us go to Calvary, and there

by faith see the awful tragedy of his death acted over again ; and let us sympathise with him, until we find it easy and pleasant to weep. The tears shed over our suffering and broken hearted Lord, are sweet tears. The hours spent in the garden and cross, are holy hours. They are among the most profitable seasons in our religious experience. O to have much fellowship with Jesus in his sufferings ! O to mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and to be in bitterness as one that is in bitterness for his first born. There is, thirdly, the want of usefulness. To live and not be useful is enough to make us weep, on account of this we may well be "exceeding sorry." Yet there are many who appear unconcerned about it. This is lamentable ! To have the will to work for Jesus, is a mercy. To have the will and talent, is a greater mercy still. To have will, talent, and opportunity, still greater mercy. But to have the will, the talent, the opportunity, and to have our poor labours crowned with success, is the



greatest mercy of all. It is enough to make any one "exceeding sorry," to have done so little for one who has done so much for us, and to leave behind us so little fruit, when we go hence to be no more seen. May I be exceeding sorry for every sin, over the sufferings of my injured Lord, and that I have been of so little use in a world where there is so much to do!

"Why, O my soul! why weepest thou?

Tell me from whence arise

Those briny tears that often flow,

Those groans that pierce the skies?

Is sin the cause of thy complaint,

Or the chastising rod?

Dost thou an evil heart lament,

Or mourn an absent God?

Lord, let me weep for nought but sin

And after none but thee!

And then I would—O that I might,

A constant weeper be!"





A MOTTO.

"Patient continuance in well doing."—ROM. ii. 7.

AN excellent motto for every Christian. Every one of us should be doing, not only as men, but as Christians; for God never intended us to be idle. We should be at work for Jesus, for immortal souls, for eternity. We should be doing well,—that which is good in its nature, and good in its tendency. We should continue doing well. Many begin, who do not persevere. Many are active by fits and starts, but they do not continue doing well. They are fond of change. The last object presented is with them, always the most important. Once they taught in the Sabbath School; that was doing well; but now they do not. But are they doing better? Once they distributed tracts, and laid aside a portion of their income to encourage tract distribution; this was doing well, but they have given it up.

Again the question returns, Are they doing better? It is a good thing to begin to *do*, and to do *well*, but it is better to *persevere* in doing so.

“Patient continuance in well doing.”
This may imply opposition, for it is when opposed in doing good, that patience is called for. It may imply temptations to give up, for then patience is especially required. We are, perhaps, too anxious for results. We do not give the seed time to grow, before we expect to admire the plant or pluck the fruit. Or, because the Lord does not bless the effort immediately, we rashly conclude that he will not, and that our labour is lost. This is decidedly wrong. In well doing, God will try the sincerity of our hearts, the purity of our motives, the strength of our love, and the degree of credit we can give him; but labour in vain for God *we cannot*. If we understood the gospel, we should know this. Paul took it for granted that the Corinthians did, therefore he said, “Be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in

the work of the Lord, *for as much as ye know*, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Brethren, are we not constantly receiving from God? Ought we not then to be constantly doing for God? As God confers blessings upon us on principle, ought we not from principle, rather than from mere feeling or excitement, work for him? Should we not labour on, though discouraged, because God bids us? Should we not persevere in our work, though tempted to give it up, and thus resist the devil? The God of patience who patiently perseveres in working for us, and conferring blessings upon us, requires patient continuance in well doing from us. Let us then imitate our heavenly Father, who "worketh hitherto;" and patiently persevere in our "work of faith, and labour of love," notwithstanding our discouragements, temptations, and rash conclusions to give up.

But are you doing nothing for God? I mean, are you engaged in no particular

work *expressly for God*? Did you begin on purpose, and with the distinct and heartfelt design, to glorify God? Many are doing things which are good in themselves, but it is a question if they are performing really "good works,"—if the result of their efforts will be found to be "fruit that will abound to their account." You are a Sabbath School teacher, but *why*? What is your motive? What led you into the school, and what keeps you there? Or, you are a preacher, regularly or occasionally preaching Christ, *why do you preach*? What led you to open your mouth at first? What is it keeps you in the work? Or, you purchase and distribute tracts, *why do you this*? Happy is the soul that can thoughtfully and honestly say, "I do it for the glory of God. I wish to honour Jesus,—I desire to benefit my fellow men,—I am impelled by an impulse I feel within,—I am stimulated by God's will. My object is to approve myself to God, and to serve my generation according to his will. Happy, thrice hap-

py I say, is the man who can thus speak. Go on my brother, go on. By patient continuance in well doing "look for glory, honour, and immortality." Go on, go on, the end of such a course is "eternal life." Rest on the finished work of Jesus alone, when thou goest to God for any blessing; but do all you can, continue to do all you can, patiently continue doing well, until thy Lord shall come, or his servant shall summon thee into his presence. Let every reader, examine his motives, look well to his rule, make sure that he has a right end in view; and having satisfactorily settled these points, let us make this our motto, "PATIENT CONTINUANCE IN WELL DOING," for in so doing we shall honour God, exalt Jesus, save souls, exasperate Satan, commend ourselves to the saints, and secure all good for ourselves.





“THE KINDNESS OF GOD.”

TITUS III. 4.

THE law reveals the majesty, holiness, and justice of God ; and when the law is first brought home to the conscience of the sinner, it produces gloom, despondency, hard thoughts of God, and enmity against God. It always hardens, contracts, and makes the heart wrathful. Consequently, we can enjoy no peace, experience no joy, nor perform any acceptable service to God ; until we are delivered from the law. The gospel reveals the kindness of God ; it represents him as sympathizing with sinners having a heart full of love to sinners, and as being determined to show infinite kindness to sinners. The knowledge of this excites hope, draws forth confidence, and produces love : so that we become new creatures, having new views, new feelings, and new desires.

The kindness of God appears in his

thoughts. We could have known nothing of God's thoughts if he had not revealed them. Nor should we have been surprised, seeing we were his avowed and determined enemies, if his thoughts had been angry and warlike towards us. But instead of this, he says, "I know the thoughts I think towards you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." What are his gracious invitations, his generous promises, and his glorious proclamations? Just his thoughts expressed in our language, and presented to us in the most winning and affecting forms. He thought of our state, and determined to deliver us. Of our wants, and determined to supply them. Of our misery, and determined to provide an antidote for it. How kind! How infinitely kind! Shall we not say with the Psalmist, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them."

The kindness of God appears in his *gifts*. We especially needed four things, and he has gratuitously conferred them

all upon us. We needed a Saviour,—one who could be a substitute for us under the law, and a sacrifice for our sins to divine justice. No one was capable of being so, but his own Son; and so great was his kindness that we read, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” We needed a Sanctifier; and none but a divine agent could accomplish this work, and in his kindness he has given his Holy Spirit. We needed a directory, an infallible directory; and he has given us his holy word. We needed eternal life, or existence without sin, sorrow, or suffering,—existence in purity, peace, and plenty; and the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Thus we have a Saviour, a Sanctifier, a Directory, and eternal life, and all by free gift, all of the mere unmerited kindness of God.

The kindness of God appears in the *messages* he sends us. He has sent to us

"The Kindness of God."

by his prophets, by his Son, by his apostles, and by his Spirit. He has sent to inform us that he is love. That he has erected a throne of grace. That he wishes us to be reconciled to him. That he is ready to forgive all our sins, and to confer on us his richest favours. He says, "Come now, and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." He solemnly protests that he has no wish to punish us, that he has no pleasure in our death. But that he is waiting to be gracious, and ready to pardon. He tells us to come to him, just as we are, and promises to provide for us, and supply us with every thing that we need. He has not been satisfied with sending one message, he has sent many; nor with sending once, he has sent often. He sends still. His ministers are appointed on purpose to deliver his messages to us, over and over again. This is the ministry of reconciliation. It is as though God did

seech us by them, they pray us in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God. God is so kind as to reason with us. He expostulates. He pleads. He invites. He asks us to be at peace with him, to come and be made happy by him. What wondrous kindness!

The kindness of God appears also in the *reception* he gives us. However great, or aggravated or numerous our sins, when we come to him for mercy, to obtain pardon, or seek for grace, he receives us lovingly. His reception of us proves his invitations to be sincere. As the father of the prodigal, when he was yet a great way off, ran and fell upon his neck, and kissed him; so the Lord meets the returning sinner, blots out his transgressions, strips him of his rags, and clothes him with the best robe of his Son's righteousness, makes a sumptuous feast, and bids all present be merry. The reception is such as none but God *could* give, as none but a God of infinite kindness *would* give. Just so, when the backslider re-

turns from his follies, as soon as he confesses his iniquities, appeals to the divine mercy, and pleads the blood of Jesus, he is pardoned, reinstated in his privileges, and the joys of God's salvation are restored. His condescension is infinite. His kindness is without a parallel. O that we did but believe the love which God hath to us!

Observe, reader, God has been incomparably kind to us. Not only to our bodies, but to our souls. Not in one instance, but in ten thousand: yea, ten thousand times ten thousand. He is as kind to us this moment as he ever was. But we have been very unkind to him. The charge brought against Israel by Isaiah, (xliii. 22, &c.,) may be brought against us. We have not given him our first thoughts, warmest love, active obedience, or filial confidence; but we have made him to serve with our sins, and have wearied him with our iniquities. We have thought unkindly of him. We have acted *unkindly* towards him. It becomes us now

to reflect seriously, to repent immediately, and to reform thoroughly. Let our thoughts dwell on the kindness of God, until our hearts are filled with kindness toward God, and our lives are spent in obedience to the will of God. He deserves our best, our all. His purposes respecting us are all kind. His plan of proceeding with us is kind. His thoughts of us are kind. His words to us, are kind. His dealings with us, are kind. There is nothing but kindness in his heart towards us, and by and bye we shall see that there was kindness in every cross, in every trial, in every disappointment, in every burden laid upon us; and shall most heartily and gratefully say, "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word." He loved us with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness he drew us to himself; and, blessed be his holy name! he has appointed an eternity for us, in which to love him, enjoy his favours, and praise him for his infinite and sovereign kindness to us.



THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM.

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom."—*EPH. i. 17.*

THUS prayed Paul for his believing friends at Ephesus. The Holy Spirit is always a gift. A father's gift, bestowed on his beloved children. The person of the Spirit is one, but the gift, graces, endowments, and operations of the Spirit are various. His names and titles are derived from his office and work. He is the "Spirit of God," for he reveals God. He is "the Spirit of Christ," for he makes known Christ. He is "the Spirit of grace," for he imparts grace. He is "the Spirit of glory" for he meetens and leads to glory. Here he is called "the Spirit of wisdom," as he makes us wise unto salvation, and imparts to us "the wisdom which is from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits; without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

“The Spirit of wisdom” appears, in teaching us to reject all false refuges, and to make sure work for eternity. Where the Spirit of wisdom is, the man will not lay his own good works for a foundation; nor will he build for salvation, partly on works and partly on grace; but he will dig deep and lay his foundation on a rock. He must have a tried stone or he will not build on it. Christ, and Christ alone will do as a foundation for his hope, an object for his faith, and a Saviour from sin and hell. He will wisely compare himself, his state, his faith, and his profession, with the word of God. Every thing will be measured by that rule. Every experience will be brought to that test. Nothing will be esteemed solid, durable, or satisfactory, that will not bear the test of God’s most holy word. He will not be satisfied with light in his head, or morality in his life, he must have an experience of the power of divine things in his heart; and whatever it may cost him of pain, effort, or anxiety, he will not rest without

the internal work of the Holy Spirit. "The Spirit of wisdom," will not let us rest at first, but as we feelingly build upon Christ alone for everlasting life; nor will he allow us to go on long with any comfort, but as we realize that we are resting on Christ, looking to Christ, and receiving from Christ. He empties us of self, to fill us with Christ. And having once fixed the affections upon Christ, he will not allow them to be satisfied with any other object. Christ within us, the hope of glory, and Christ for us, the object of faith, and source of comfort, gives us solid satisfaction, and well founded assurance. With this the Spirit will allow us to rest well satisfied, but with nothing short of it.

"The Spirit of wisdom" teaches us to exercise our graces, and qualifies us to perform our religious duties. But for his gracious presence, indwelling, and power, we should not know when, or how, to embrace the promises, rest in them, or successfully plead them before God. There

would be no patience in tribulation, hope in dullness, submission under the rod, sorrow for discovered sin, or much yielding of ourselves to our Father's will. Every grace needs its impulse, and requires his directing energy. But for the Spirit of wisdom, every command of God would be grievous; every duty would be irksome and difficult; and the ordinances would be like dry breasts. If He enlarge our hearts, we run in the way of God's commandments; but if left to ourselves, we are inactive, cold and lifeless. It is easy to act grace if he directs us. It is sweet to perform duty if he assist us. But if left to ourselves, the very reverse is the case. May our heavenly Father give us more and more of the powerful presence and gracious operation of "the Spirit of wisdom."

"The Spirit of wisdom" fits us for our stations in the Church of God. Our inward furniture is from him. He must confer the gifts, impart the grace, point out our place, and help us in our employ-

ment, or we shall be sure to fall into mistakes. For want of "the Spirit of wisdom," many fancy they are qualified for the office of a pastor, who are only fit to be occasional preachers. Many fancy they are called to the ministry, who are only gifted to be Sunday School teachers. Many fancy they ought to be deacons, who were never intended to leave the ranks of private members. On account of these mistakes, churches, instead of getting pastors, are troubled with plagues: congregations have their patience tried, and their souls starved, by a fruitless ministry: unqualified deacons lord it over a poor pastor, and neglect the deacon's duty to the poor of the flock; and Sunday School teachers are needed, just because those who ought to teach, have wandered out of their proper sphere. Did the Lord's people look more to the Spirit, did they wait more in earnest prayer upon the Spirit, did they watch and expect to see the working of the Holy Spirit, both in providence and grace, these mistakes and disorders would

be prevented, and so much misery would be escaped. There is no fitness or qualification for any office in the church of Christ without an extra degree of grace, and special communications from the Holy Spirit; and these will be manifested by deep humility, and a profound sense of unfitness for the work, and unworthiness to be raised to so high an honour. A man is never really qualified for *that* in God's church, for which he fancies he is just fit, and thinks no one could do so well. Aspirants to office are very often the most unqualified. Nearness to God, the effect of special grace and divine teaching, always deeply humbles us; and while it inspires us with a burning desire to do something to glorify God, makes us feel, with Abigail, that we are not worthy to wash the feet of the servants of our Lord.

"The Spirit of wisdom" teaches us to shun every evil, especially sin, setting the heart against it, and the eye to watch and detect temptations to it. It leads us to *seek every good, especially holiness; or*


The Spirit of Wisdom.

internal and external conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. He guides the heart to find a high state of holiness, and then select and employ the most likely means to attain it. The effect of his presence mourning over inbred sin and the want of conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ, temper, disposition, object, and aim. Ardent longings and fervent desires for inward cleansing and outward reformation with ardent hopes and steady aims reach the mark and obtain the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Sin is our daily burden, and holiness our constant pursuit. The fear of God placed as sentinel of the soul, to watch the approach of the enemy, and give the alarm at his approach. Godly sorrow is appointed the messenger, to carry the petitions, confessions, and desires to the throne of grace. Zeal is armed with sword, to cut off the sinful right hand, thrust out the misleading right eye. A watchman is placed on the watch tower, to look for the coming of the Lord, when

expire in his presence, and holiness be perfected in the rays of his glory. Faith is engaged to work for God and man, having the promises for its support, the precepts for its guide, and love for its handmaid. Patience is furnished with a rod, to keep all quiet and calm within, let the weather be never so foul, the burden never so heavy, and the trial never so severe, and to call submission and resignation into active employment, if fretfulness, murmuring, or dissatisfaction should attempt to stir. Peace is placed as a garrison, to keep the heart and mind from anxiety, foreboding, and fault finding with the Lord's dealings. Joy is directed to run backwards and forwards to the wells of salvation, to supply the soul with the reviving, invigorating, and strengthening waters of life. Thus evil is prevented, good is secured, God is glorified, Satan is nonplussed, and the soul is saved.

"The Spirit of wisdom," makes us wise to win souls. He sets the heart upon it, *engages the energies in it, directs the soul*

to attempt it, and gives special qualifications for it. Wisdom is especially necessary for this work, for Satan has possession, and he is crafty, experienced, and determined: the soul loves sin, lives in it as its element, and will not willingly leave it; the world has cast its net over it, and with the lust of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, holds it fast. Only the godly wise can expect to win souls. But if the heart is set upon it, if we cannot be satisfied without it, if we are determined to persevere in attempting it, we are justly qualified for it, and shall not be put off without it. Besides which the apostolic direction comes in, "If any man lack wisdom," whether to manage trials perform duties, or win souls; "let him ask it of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith," believeng God's promise, "nothing wavering. For he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed." Such have no firmness of purpose, no stability of soul,



no perseverance in prayer, no steady expectation from God, though he has given his word, and so pledged his character. Brethren, if you would be qualified to exercise your graces, to perform your duties, to be fitted for and placed in your proper station, to shun the evil and seek the good, to win souls, to escape the snares of the world, and to honour God both in your body and soul, which are God's; then seek, earnestly, daily, importunately seek, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom." This will not only make you wise unto salvation, but wise to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. This will make you an ornament in the church, a blessing in the world, a conqueror of Satan, and a sweet savour unto God. This will entitle you to the promise, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."



THE FEAR OF THE GRAVE.

THE fear of death is natural, but to fear the grave appears fanciful. Death is the enemy of nature. It is the first-born of sin. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death *by sin*." Death severs all ties but one. The band that unites us to Jesus defies the power of death. It is demanded by justice, and assented to by grace. We *must* die, except Jesus should come before death. The grave follows death. It receives the body which the soul has forsaken. The poles and canvass of the old tabernacle are laid up there. It is a merciful provision to conceal corruption, and prevent disease. "The grave is my house," said Job. "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave!" So he sighed under his sorrows. He did not fear the grave, though the lamp of the gospel was not burning in it then as now. In the grave, the poor body will be

from all diseases, aches and pains. There will be no gout, rheumatism, fevers, or cholera there. There will be no weak nerves or relaxed muscles there. There will be no hunger or thirst there. "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary are at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and the great are there; and the servant is free from his master." It is a quiet resting-place for the poor body which has finished its work, suffered its Lord's will, and is not at present necessary for the soul's happiness or the Lord's service. "Jesus cometh to the grave." It was to the grave of Lazarus, in company with Martha, Mary, and his disciples. O Saviour, whenever we visit the grave of our friends, or, in thought, visit our own, come thou with us, dissipate the gloom, and surround us with thy glory!

Why should we fear the grave? Can it *injure* us? Will it rob us? Is it *really* an enemy to us? The effect that

the cold clay or damp vault has upon our nerves is occasioned by the idea of life or feeling under the circumstances. The clay is not colder than the body which it covers, nor the vault more dreary than the corpse which it conceals. We choose our graves ; we fancy the elevated spot from which the waters run, on which the sun brightly shines, where the green sward is kept smooth, where the flowers blossom, and the wind sighs through the trees. We direct the inscription to be placed at our head ; it may refer to the sufferings endured, the station filled, the grace that saved, or, which is perhaps best, it may be a pointed appeal to the reader, hoping to benefit his soul. We exercise our thoughts on these subjects, we sigh, the nerves tremble, and an indefinite but unpleasant sensation is experienced, and a fear of the grave is produced. But again we ask, Why should we fear the grave ? What is there in it to fear ? I know not that it should be the object of desire ; I am sure that it should not be

the object of fear. We should turn our thoughts from it, and leave it with the Lord. When, where, and by whom we shall be buried, or where our graves shall be, ought not to trouble us for one moment. There are matters of greater importance to engage our attention and occupy our thoughts. If the grave receive us, it cannot hold us, for Jesus is pledged to destroy every grave. His word is, "Oh, grave, I will be thy destruction." Therefore with the apostle we may demand, "Oh, grave, where is thy victory?"

But being harassed with fears of the grave, how shall we conquer them? *Keep the conscience clear of the guilt of sin.* As soon as sin is committed or discovered, lay the hand of faith on Jesus as the great sacrifice for sin, confess it before God, and ask for an immediate pardon for the sake of what Jesus suffered. Ask the Father to honour the blood and obedience of his own Son, by pardoning the sins you have just committed, and to remove the guilt that lies upon your conscience. Guilt is

at the root of all slavish fear. You cannot look at death with peace, or into the grave without fear, if there is any guilt upon the conscience. And guilt is like some colours, the longer it lies the deeper it stains, and the more difficult it is to eradicate it. Therefore never allow guilt to lie upon your conscience, but as soon as ever you detect it fly to the precious blood of Christ at once, exercise faith in it while you confess your sins, and expect a free and hearty pardon on the ground of it. *Live in the daily realization of your union to Christ, if possible.* Never rest until you know that you are one with Christ; and having obtained the witness of the Spirit to this great fact live daily realizing it. If you dwell in Christ, and Christ dwells in you; if you are a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, what have you to fear from the grave? If you live, you live in the Lord; or, if you die, you die in the Lord; living or dead, therefore, you are one with Christ. "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write,

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." They die under the Lord's blessing; they are buried under the Lord's blessing; what then is there to fear? Death or the grave cannot affect our union to Christ. The body is as much united to Christ when mouldering in the grave, as when animated by the immortal spirit, and employing its senses and powers in the Lord's service, or as it will be on the resurrection morning, when it rises the exact *facsimile* of of his own. Glorious truth this! Un-speakable privilege to be one with Jesus, —one with him in health and sickness, in life and death, on earth and in the grave, in time and eternity! May I daily live realizing that I am one with Jesus, and I shall never fear either death or the grave. *Seek to have the fact deeply impressed upon the mind, that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost.* This is your privilege as a believer in Jesus. The Holy Spirit

takes possession of us as the property of Jesus. We become his constant residence, his settled dwelling-place, his consecrated temple. When he has once taken possession he never abandons it. The house may be pulled down, the materials may for a time be laid in the grave; but he claims every dust, and it shall be restored or rebuilt. The materials are the same, but, oh, the change that passes upon them! The temple is the same, but how wonderfully it will be improved! Let us for a moment or two listen to his inspired apostle on this subject:—"Some will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So, also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in

dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." This change will be effected by the Holy Spirit when Jesus comes, as we read, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies *by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" Now he stamps the likeness of Jesus on our souls ; then he will stamp the likeness of Jesus on our bodies. Now we are made like Christ morally or spiritually ; then we shall be made like Christ physically. Body and soul will be like Jesus, perfectly and eternally. If my body is the temple of the blessed Spirit, may I not leave it to him to take care of it ? Or, if my body is the Spirit's temple, shall I fear its being laid in the grave, when He will keep possession of it, watch over, and raise it up again ? *Remember, also, that Jesus has said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave ; I will redeem them from death. Oh, death, I will*

be thy plagues! oh, grave, I will be thy destruction! repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." He ransomed us once by his blood, he will ransom us by and bye by his power. Though the grave receive us, it will not be able long to hold us. We do but fall asleep, and the grave is the dark chamber where we quietly slumber, "until the day dawn, and the shadows flee away." Do we fear our bed-room? Are we alarmed because the shutters are closed and it is dark? No. Why not? Just because we are used to it. Now we have no more cause to fear the grave than we have to fear our chamber. There we shall sleep soundly and sweetly, while the storms rattle overhead, and death and destruction ride in triumph all around. We shall not be disturbed by the sound of the trumpet or the alarm of war. There are no headaches or heart-aches there. There are no deep sighs or heavy groans there. There are no briny tears or bitter sorrows there. There are no sleepless nights or longings for the morning there. All is calm and

quiet. All is rest and repose. All is safety and security. Well might the poor afflicted patriarch cry out, "Oh, that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me." Instead of fearing the grave, one rather wonders that many of the Lord's people do not long for it. As when one goes tired to rest after a long wearisome journey on a cold winter's evening, sleeps soundly all night, and awakes the next morning at broad daylight, with a feeling that the night has been exceedingly short; so will it be with us, when on the morning of the first resurrection we open our eyes, with a feeling that only a short time before, a very short time, we fell asleep in Jesus. *Once more, learn to look beyond the grave, to the soul's residence, or the Redeemer's glorious advent.* Absent from the body, we shall be present with the Lord. The moment the soul quits the body "its thinkings and achings are o'er;"* and the emancipated spirit,

like the bird which has escaped from its narrow, wiry prison, ascends to its Redeemer's throne, to enjoy freedom, perfect freedom, and everlasting joy. It is only the casket that is left behind; the jewel sparkles in the Saviour's diadem. It is only the tent that lies prostrate; the inhabitant has arrived at his journey's end, and has finished his pilgrimage through the desert. It is only the outer garment that is laid in that stone wardrobe; the wearer is safe, and clothed upon with a covering which is from heaven. Let me think, then, of my happiness which I shall enjoy in my disembodied state. Let me even look forward with pleasure to the time when I shall "depart and be with Christ, which is far better." With Christ! What will it be to be with Jesus? With Christ! Oh, delightful idea! To be with Christ, to be like Christ, to enjoy Christ, and eternally to honour Christ! "Oh, that will be heaven to me!" And suppose the body that has so long shared my sorrows and my joys, with which I have

lived in such close and intimate fellowship, is left for a time in the cold, dark grave. It is not for long. Jesus will soon come and call for it; he will raise it, fashion it like unto his own glorious body, and then receive it unto himself. He is coming on purpose to raise the dead bodies of his saints, and to change the living ones. He will have us with him. Body and soul were alike purchased by his blood, and are both destined to share in his glory. He will soon come. The intermediate space between our death and the resurrection of the just is scarcely worth a thought. We shall be fully employed in heaven as far as our spiritual and immaterial part is concerned; and our poor bodies will be safe and unconscious in the grave.

Blessed be God for his holy word! Blessed be the Lord Jesus for bringing life and immortality to light by the gospel! I will not look at the grave with the naked eye any more; I will look at it through the gospel. Precious gospel, which plants *the flowers of Paradise* around the graves

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the saints, and pours the light of glory into the otherwise dark chamber of the tomb! The Sun of Righteousness was confined in it, and exhaled all its unwholesome damps. When he rose he left his shroud to cover us, and his napkin to wipe away the tears of our weeping friends. Shall I fear to lay where Jesus has lain before me? Shall I object to be wrapped up in the linen which covered his sacred flesh? He assures me I shall rise again. His own resurrection was the pledge of it. The morning cometh, in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice. Oh, what a morning will that be! How bright, how rosy, how balmy! To what a day will that introduce us! What light will shine on us; what breezes will fan us; what odours will perfume us; what sounds will ravish us; what sights will delight us; what sensations will thrill through us; what delightful enjoyments will be realized by us! "The sun shall be no more of light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto us; but Jehovah shall be our everlasting light, and our C

our glory. Our sun shall no more go down, neither shall our moon withdraw itself; for Jehovah shall be our everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended." Must we pass through the valley of the shadow of death? Must our bodies be laid in the grave? It may be so. Thousands are there before us, and thousands will follow after us; but "the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Let us, then, be willing to be conformed to Jesus in his humiliation, even to the laying of the body in the grave; and live in the sweet expectation of sharing with him in all his glory; for "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."





THE PRESERVATIVE FROM SHAME.

"The scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."—ROM. x. 11.

"CONFIDENCE in an unfaithful man in time of trouble," said Solomon, "is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint." Neither useful nor comfortable, but sources of disappointment and pain; with the one we cannot masticate, with the other we cannot walk; they neither minister to our nourishment nor our progress. Just so a false friend, a fickle confidant. Few things are more important than the right placing of our confidence. The apostle presents a contrast to Solomon; here is one in whom you may confide, one whom you may trust, a faithful friend, a powerful Saviour, and "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

Suppose I am likely to want a large sum of money at some given period. A pro-

fessed friend comes forward, and says, "I will find it. It shall be forthcoming on the day you want it." I believe him. I am easy. I have no fear. But the day arrives. I tell my creditor his money is ready. I go to the friend who promised, but he disappoints me. He is either unable to help me, or unfaithful to his word. I am confused. I am confounded. I am ashamed of my confidence in him, and of my boasting to others. "I had confidence in an unfaithful man," and in the "time of trouble" he was "like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint."

Or, I have a piece of valuable property which I am anxious to keep safely. I want to put it where I shall have no doubt of its security. I meet with a person whom I think I can trust. I enquire respecting him, and I feel confident. I am anxious to secure it, because I must account for it. I entrust it to the keeping of my friend. I commit it to his custody. I leave it without any fear in his keeping. I tell all around me how happy I am,

because I have found one whom I can trust, and I feel as if my responsibility was gone. Time rolls on. I am called upon to present the piece of property, or to account for it. I look to my friend, but too late I discover he was not trustworthy. I am ashamed of my confidence. I expected, fully expected, that all would be right, but now I am ashamed of my hope. It is a time of trouble, and my false friend "is like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint." Oh, the pain felt! The vexation experienced! The self-reproaches uttered!

Now, apply the subject to spiritual things. I am entrusted with an immortal soul. My one principal business is to secure its salvation. I trust to my own works. I confide in my own sincere endeavours. I rely on my repentance, or faith, or reformation. I am required to present my soul to God righteous, holy, completely what he requires it to be. Trusting in myself, my own endeavours, or partly on myself and partly on Christ, *I die*. I appear before God. I hoped that

as he was merciful,—I believed that as I was moral and externally devout,—I trusted that as I was better than many others, all would be well. But, alas, too late I feel myself mistaken. A perfect righteousness is required, but I have it not. Inward holiness is necessary to heaven, but I have it not. I am required to stand perfect and complete in all the will of God, but I do not, I cannot. I look round for help from Jesus, whom I had connected with my works, but I am demanded to produce a warrant for uniting grace and works, Christ and my own performances, as a foundation for hope, but I have none. I thought my own sincere efforts would be sufficient, or if not, that Christ would make up the deficiency. I find out that I am mistaken. I am ashamed, for I had boasted that all would be right. I am ashamed, for I had God's word, but I did not make it my guide or directory in my eternal concerns.

Or, instead of this, I am convinced that I am deeply in debt to Divine justice, and


that payment will be required. I am not only unable to pay the whole sum, but I cannot pay one mite of it. To all intents and purposes I am undone, unless I can find some one who is rich enough, and generous enough, to pay the whole for me. Nor can I be easy or happy, unless I have his word that he will do so. Nor then, unless I am assured that he is trustworthy. I must know him to be wealthy, to be kind, to be truthful, to be faithful, or I cannot trust such a momentous affair in his hands. I hear of Jesus. I am informed that he is immensely rich. That his riches are unsearchable. That he delights to pay the debts of insolvent persons. That he is both able and willing to undertake to be paymaster for every one who will believe his word, rely on his veracity, and place confidence in his honour. I think, consider, examine, venture. I look to Jesus to make full payment. To meet the whole demand that can be made upon me by the law, justice, or government of God. I place confidence in him,—in him alone. I

die in this confidence. I appear before God. Jesus is there. I look to him. I point to him. I expect him to answer for me. He stands forth. He honours my faith, confidence, and reliance. His perfect work is placed to my account. I am acquitted. Every demand is met. Free grace is glorified. God's word is honoured. The gospel shines forth with the brilliance of a thousand suns. The scripture statement is verified, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Ashamed! No; but honoured, exalted, glorified!

Take another view. I am entrusted with an immortal soul. That soul is guilty, and must be pardoned; it is filthy, and must be cleansed; it is naked, and must be clothed; it is in danger, and must have an Almighty protector. Jesus is presented to me. He is able to do all that I need. He is willing to do all. But if he does, I must commit my soul into his hands; yield myself to be ruled by his word; in a word, must consent to be his.

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His entirely. His eternally. Well, I consent. I commit my soul to Jesus to be pardoned through his merit, to be cleansed in his blood, to be clothed in his righteousness, and to be kept by his power. I give myself away to him entirely. I leave myself in his hands to be saved by him, by him alone, by him altogether. Now I have peace. I feel confident that he will do as he has said. That all my sins will be blotted out. That all my stains will be eradicated, That I shall be clothed and adorned with his magnificent righteousness. That he will keep me from falling, and present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. I look forward to death without fear, to the great day without alarm. Why? I am safe. I have a Saviour. I am in his hands. My soul, and my eternal interests, are in his keeping. I die in faith. I ascend to heaven exercising full confidence in Jesus. I am admitted. I am accepted. I am safe. I have a mansion. I am at home among the saints. I am to be with, and



to enjoy the approbation of Jesus for ever. Blessed state! Glorious privilege! But this honour have all his saints; that is, all that believe on his name and commit their souls to his keeping. So that, as the scripture has said, "Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed."

Reader, see to it, that thou art believing on Jesus. Beware *whom* you trust, or on *what* you trust. Works alone will not do. Works and grace united will not do. Self will not do. Self and Jesus joined will not do. Any creature will not do. Any creature joined with Jesus will not do. If saved, you must be saved by grace alone. If saved, you must be saved by Jesus alone. Not Jesus and Mary! Not Jesus and the merit of saints! Not Jesus and the priests, or created intercessors! No, Jesus alone! He can save without help. If he save at all, he will save without help. If pardoned, it must be through his blood. If justified, it must be in his righteousness. If kept, it must be by his power. If sanctified, it must be by his

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Spirit. Beware, oh beware, of attempting to mix anything with the perfect work of Jesus, or of uniting any one with him, either equally or subordinately, in the great matter of thy soul's salvation ! Look to him alone, trust him alone, and let thy thoughts correspond with this hymn :—

“ When rising from the bed of death,
O'erwhelmed with guilt and fear ;
I see my Maker face to face,
Oh how shall I appear !
If yet, while pardon may be found,
And mercy may be sought,
My heart with inward horror shrinks,
And trembles at the thought,
When thou, O Lord, shalt stand disclosed,
In majesty severe,
And sit in judgment on my soul,
Oh how shall I appear !
But thou hast told the troubled soul,
That doth her sins lament,
That Jesus suffered unto death,
Her sufferings to prevent.
Then why, my soul, should'st thou despair,
Full pardon to procure ;
Since Christ, the Lord of glory, died,
To make that pardon sure.”



"I'LL TELL FATHER."

GOING down Oxford-passage the other evening, I heard two boys talking very loud, and just as I came up to them, the one said to the other, "*I'll tell father.*" The words not only fell upon my ear, but entered into my heart. I thought, here is a lesson for me. A lesson for all the Lord's people. This is just what we should do. The boy enjoyed a privilege,—he had a father. He knew that his father was interested in him and all his affairs,—that his father would interfere for him,—and that his father would settle all his concerns.

Beloved, we have a Father. God is our Father. He has adopted us into his family. He has regenerated us by his Spirit. He has made himself known unto us. He wishes us to call him father. He loves to be treated by us as a father. It is wondrous grace in God to condescend thus. But nothing can be plainer than this fact

is revealed in his holy word. He not only wears a father's name, but he has a father's heart. He loves every believer with a father's love. He watches over every child with a father's care. Yes, we have a Father, and he is always near us. His heart is ever disposed to do us good. He will not withdraw his eye from us. He bids us cast every care upon him, to expect every blessing from him, and to carry everything that troubles us to him.

We should then go and tell our father. Do our brethren manifest coldness, or do they act unkindly to us? Let us not resent it, or shew any bad feeling to them, but let us go and tell our father of them. Do sinners oppose, persecute, and slander us? Let us not render evil for evil, or endeavour to avenge ourselves, but let us go and tell our father. Does providence frown on us, perplex, and trouble us? Let us not fret, complain, or forebode, but go and tell father. Does Satan tempt, suggest evil thoughts, or endeavour to mislead us? Let us not parley with him, be alarmed

at him, or yield to him, but go at once and tell father. Are we sick, or sad, or doubting our title to the promises and privileges of the gospel? Let us go at once and frankly tell our father. Are we smiled upon by providence, are friends kind, are our souls happy? Let us go and gratefully tell our father. Everything, whether painful or pleasant, should lead us to God. And one reason why we are kept so short, feel so weak, and are allowed to be so tried, is in order that we may never want something to carry to our Father. He loves to see us come. He loves to listen to our broken prayers. He loves to sympathise with us. And one proof that his ways are not as our ways is, that he never chides us for coming too often, or refuses to listen to us. Happy child, that has such a father! And wise is that child who carries everything to his father. Who tells him all, keeping nothing from him. Our Father will listen to every child, at any moment, under any of his trying circumstances. He will interfere for us. When we carry

our cares or our quarrels to him, he says, "Leave them with me. I will manage them. I will settle them." And he does adjust and arrange all the affairs of his people. He may take time. It does seem sometimes as if he had forgotten, but he has not. He is watching us. He is seeing if we can leave the matter to him. If we are satisfied that he should manage it without our meddling with it. He will see how much time we can give him. Whether we really wish him to undertake the whole affair, or wish ourselves to direct, while he only helps us out of the difficulty. He requires filial confidence, child-like simplicity. He loves to be trusted, and always rewards every child that patiently and confidently waits for him.

Brethren, the way to have peace of mind, is to act as the boy proposed to do not quarrel, or fight with your brother in the street, or sulk and be cold toward him at home—but go and tell father, and then leave the matter with him. Your father knows better how to manage your brot

than you do, and he will not forget that you have laid his misconduct before him. He may not flog him before your face, or loudly reprove him in your hearing. He may take him quietly on one side, and whisper his reproofs into his ear. If he confesses and forsakes the wrong course, well ; but if not, he may lay him on the sick bed and say, "Lay there, and reflect." Or, bring him into trying circumstances by his providence, and ask, "Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?" Or, he may speak to him from the pulpit, or by the reading of his word. However, you may very safely leave your brother's correction to your father, except God's word call upon you to interfere in it. This is the way to maintain our character, and prove ourselves to be "merciful, as our heavenly father is merciful ;" and the sons of peace, even as our God is "the God of peace." This is the way to make a good impression on the world, and to rise in the church. For if we have much to do with our Father in secret, he will reward

us openly. Thus we shall be ready for death, or the advent of Jesus, which ever may come first. If we refer everything to our Father, our consciences will be kept tender and clear, our hearts peaceful and patient, our walk honest and orderly, and our end will not be without honour.

Christian, *run* to thy Father from every foe, from every danger, from every fractious brother. *Tell* thy Father every thing that vexes, grieves, or troubles thee. *Trust* thy Father to manage all thy affairs, to vindicate thee if aspersed, to lift thee up if trodden under foot, and to "bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment," or just sentence, "as the noon-day." *Honour* thy Father, by consulting him on all matters, by confiding to him all thy secrets, and by making his written word thy daily rule on all points. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly be loved, avenge not yourselves, but rather

give place unto wrath," the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Under reproaches and persecutions, in temptations and trials, amidst troubles and distresses, when alarmed and terrified, if perplexed and disappointed—dwell not on the circumstances, yield not to nature, listen not to Satan, follow not carnal custom, but go and "tell father." This is the easiest, the holiest, the most successful way to overcome evil, to conquer Satan, to manage trouble, to succeed in your enterprise, to maintain your character, and to rise before all good and godly men. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." Or, with childlike simplicity, filial confidence, and honest hearts, they go and tell their Father.

But, sinner, you have no father to whom you can run in trouble, or to whom you can tell your griefs. God is angry with you. You are his enemy. You have

refused to be reconciled unto him. You treat him with contempt, and cast his words behind you. Your conduct is criminal. Your case is pitiable. If you persevere your end will be dreadful. You refuse to submit to his righteousness, to bow to his sovereignty, to be saved by his beloved Son. He has called you to him, but you have refused to come. He has entreated you to be reconciled, but you reject his entreaties. You are justly condemned, and, if you persevere, you will be righteously punished. But, still there is forgiveness with him, he is willing to receive you, to pardon you, to put you among his children—say, therefore, with the prodigal, “I will arise, and go to my father.” Go, and go at once. Go and frankly confess your sins, plead the blood of Jesus, and God “will be a father unto you” and the great, the precious privilege, will be yours to cast all your cares upon him; or, under insult, temptation, trial, sorrow, or distress, to go and tell your Father.



LINES

On the dying words of CATHERINE CROPPER, who died at the age of 88 years, she having been a member of the church meeting in New Park Street 55 years. Just before she died, as she was speaking very earnestly to a young person, her niece wishing her to spare herself, she said, "Let me speak for Christ while I've breath, it will soon be over."

Thus spake the dying saint in Jordan's flood,
Still anxious to commend her gracious God ;
To tell to all around his saving power,
Which thus sustained her in her dying hour.

She felt his presence, trusted in his word,
Met the last enemy, his grace adored !
And wished, as she was yielding up her breath,
To speak for Jesus in the arms of death.

Yes, let me speak for Jesus while I can,
Who came to save poor, wretched, sinful man ;
My time is short, my moments haste away,
I'll speak of Jesus, while on earth I stay.

'Twill soon be over, death is just at hand,
He comes to lead me to the promised land ;
Then let me speak of Jesus, by whose blood
My soul is ransomed and brought near to God.

I'll speak for Jesus while I have my voice,
In him, and him alone, will I rejoice ;
If all the world could hear my dying word,
I'd speak in praise of my beloved Lord.

I'd tell poor sinners of his power to save
From sin, from Satan, and the dreary grave ;
I'd point them to his cross, and cry aloud,
Behold the true, the only way to God.

There is no hope for sinners but in him,
He only could a sinful soul redeem ;
But he can save the vilest of our race,
And thus exalt the riches of his grace.

Then let me speak for Jesus while I live,
Who dying will my happy soul receive ;
He spake for me, or I had been undone,
But now my interests and his are one.

He spake for me before the world began,
When God the Father drew redemption's plan ;
He spake for me when on the cross he cried,
And, as my ransom, suffered, bled, and died.

He spake for me before his father's throne,
Received and sent the promised Spirit down ;
He spake to me when I was dead in sin,
And did a glorious work in me begin.

He spake for me when under guilt and gloom,
He bade me to his throne of mercy come ;
My sins he pardoned, and removed my load,
He fill'd my bosom with the peace of God.

He whispered, " I will be thy constant friend,
I'll love, direct, and keep thee to the end ; "
And shall I not, while life and breath is given,
Speak of my Saviour who will guide to heaven ?

O yes, I'll speak of him, and tell his fame,
I'll shout the honours of his blessed name ;
I'll bear my witness to his love and care,
And bid poor sinners trust, and not despair.

To speak of him shall be my chief delight,
Until I stand before him clothed in white ;
And wave the victor's palm and sing his praise,
And wear my blood-bought crown through endless
days.

I've found him faithful more than four-score years,
Though often filled with doubts and gloomy fears ;
He ne'er forsook me when most sorely tried,
But did for all my numerous wants provide.
His precious blood my pardon did procure,
His word of promise is both true and sure ;
His name before the throne is all my plea,
His intercession will avail for me.

His finish'd work alone is all my trust,
In his obedience I'm accounted just ;
For me he conquered Satan, death and hell,
And shall I not his wondrous goodness tell ?

O yes, I'll speak of Jesus while I've breath,
And boast of him before the monster death ;
Trusting in him, the last great foe I face,
And shout, " Salvation is alone of grace."

If I should hold my peace, and cease to tell
How Jesus saved my sinful soul from hell ;
My conscience would upbraid me, and reprove
My base ingratitude for all his love.

But I will speak of Jesus while I may,
For here on earth I have not long to stay ;
I soon shall join the bright celestial throng,
And join to sing the everlasting song.

His glorious person has engaged my love,
I do his grace and tender mercy prove ;
Dying I bear my witness, " He is true :"
Trust him, my friends, he'll bring you safe

Then let me speak of Jesus—yes I will,
And try to lead poor sinners to him still ;
O let me speak of Christ while I have breath,
’Twill soon be over, what I feel is death.

My dear Redeemer, let my trembling voice,
And sinful soul in thy dear name rejoice ;
I now depart in peace to be with thee,
And all the glories of thy kingdom see.

Reader, do you in Jesus Christ believe ?
Do you into your heart his word receive ?
Are you renewed and sanctified by grace ?
And are you longing to behold his face ?

You must be born again, or die the death :
There’s no salvation but by living faith :
Examine, is the Saviour in your heart ?
Do you from every evil course depart ?

If you should live in sin—the Saviour slight,
Presuming that at last all will be right ;
Eternal burnings must your portion be,
And black despair to all eternity.





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